



940.938 T19h

---

## Keep Your Card in This Pocket

---

Books will be issued only on presentation of proper library cards.

Unless labeled otherwise, books may be retained for two weeks. Borrowers finding books marked, defaced or mutilated are expected to report same at library desk; otherwise the last borrower will be held responsible for all imperfections discovered.

The card holder is responsible for all books drawn on this card.

Penalty for over-due books 2c a day plus cost of notices.

Lost cards and change of residence must be reported promptly.



**Public Library**  
**Kansas City, Mo.**

---

## Keep Your Card in This Pocket

---

KANSAS CITY, MO PUBLIC LIBRARY



0 0001 0339881 4









# THE HOUSE NEAR PARIS

An American Woman's Story of  
Traffic in Patriots

BY DRUE TARTIÈRE

WRITTEN WITH M. R. WERNER



19 46

SIMON AND SCHUSTER · NEW YORK

ALL RIGHTS RESERVED  
INCLUDING THE RIGHT OF REPRODUCTION  
IN WHOLE OR IN PART IN ANY FORM  
COPYRIGHT, 1946, BY DRUE TARTIERE AND M. R. WERNER  
PUBLISHED BY SIMON AND SCHUSTER, INC.  
ROCKEFELLER CENTER, 1230 SIXTH AVENUE  
NEW YORK 20, N. Y.

SECOND PRINTING

MANUFACTURED IN THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA  
BY AMERICAN BOOK-STRATFORD PRESS, INC., NEW YORK

TO  
JACQUES



## Table of Contents

---

I. BACK TO OCCUPATION	3
II. THE DAWN OF RESISTANCE	31
III. INTERNMENT	72
IV. CLANDESTINE GUESTS	143
V. THE DAWN OF INVASION	219
VI. RESCUE AND LIBERATION	255

## List of Illustrations

	<i>Facing page</i>
VILLA L'ÉCUREUIL, BARBIZON	54
THE HOUSE ON THE PLAIN	55
NADINE	86
COLETTE AND DRUE TARTIÈRE	87
MME. DE GESNES WITH DRUE TARTIÈRE	87

	<i>Facing page</i>
MME. BOUVIE, BARBIZON NEIGH- BOR, AND DRUE TARTIÈRE	166
DRUE TARTIÈRE'S CERTIFICATE OF RELEASE FROM THE CONCENTRA- TION CAMP AT VITTEL	166
TRANSLATION OF CERTIFICATE	167
DRUE TARTIÈRE'S TRAVEL PERMIT WITH TRANSLATION	167
OLYMPE, ANOTHER NEIGHBOR, WITH DRUE TARTIÈRE	278
MME. OLGA CHRISTOL	279
DRUE TARTIÈRE WITH MARY RODE AND HER MOTHER	279
DRUE TARTIÈRE AND THE FIVE FLIERS IN THE COURTYARD AT BARBIZON	310
LIBERATION LUNCHEON AT BARBI- ZON	310
JACQUES TARTIÈRE IN SYRIA	311



In this story I have tried simply to tell my adventure in occupation and resistance. I am deeply conscious of the fact that I was merely a cog in the vast machinery of heroism which functioned daily in France against her oppressors. Many thousands of men and women did more than I could, endured more than I was compelled to; and many of them have given their lives for a cause we all thought worth more than life in slavery. Some of them I had the privilege of knowing and working with, but others, though they were silently helping me and all of us, will never be known to the world that owes them so much. I wish to pay this tribute to the living and dead who refused to submit.

DRUE TARTIÈRE



# THE HOUSE NEAR PARIS



## I. *Back to Occupation*

### I

It was June 17, 1940. Marshal Pétain, who had taken over power in France that day, walked into the broadcasting studio in Bordeaux at about ten o'clock in the morning. Obviously a very old man, he still carried himself erect and his appearance was military. The eight of us who were standing in the room watched every movement the old man made and waited tensely for the words he was about to deliver. Throughout the rest of the building the personnel of the radio station was standing in the corridors, waiting for the voice of fate to come through the loudspeakers. Throughout France people were listening for the message of their new chief of state. In the studio a boy was arrang-

ing the microphone, but he did not do it fast enough to suit the old Marshal. Pétain gave him a kick. Then he stepped to the microphone and in a firm voice delivered this speech:

At the call of the President of the Republic I assumed, beginning today, the direction of the government of France.

I say that by the affection of our admirable army, which is fighting with a heroism worthy of its long military traditions against an enemy superior in numbers and arms, by the magnificent resistance with which it has fulfilled our duties to our allies, by the aid of the war veterans whom I am proud to command, by the confidence of all the people, I give to France my person to assuage her misfortune.

In these painful hours I think of the unhappy refugees who, in extreme misery, clog up our roads. I express to them my compassion and my solicitude.

It is with a broken heart that I tell you today it is necessary to stop fighting.

I addressed myself last night to the adversary to ask him if he is ready to seek with me, as soldier to soldier, after the actual fighting is over, and with honor, the means of putting an end to hostilities.

May all Frenchmen group themselves about the government which I head during these trying days and control their anguish in order to be led only by their faith in the destiny of the fatherland.

Pétain stopped talking and walked out. I had stood next to him in the small broadcasting studio and had seen no signs of the broken heart he said he had when he told the French people that he had asked the hated Nazis for peace terms.

For a while after he left no one in the room spoke. It took us some little time to grasp the meaning of what we had heard, but beneath the flattery and deception the big news stood out brazenly. France had still been fighting, but Pétain, the new chief of state, had decided to quit and was forcing the country along with him in that decision. On the faces of my colleagues in that room was an expression of bewilderment and despair. "What now?" all of them seemed to be saying. I left the studio, filled with a sense of futility as well as despair. The long hours we had put in since September, 1939, the great efforts of everyone, had come to this ignominious end.

I was one of the refugees Pétain spoke of as clogging the roads. There were now well over a hundred thousand of us crowded into Bordeaux, part of the woeful swarm of men, women, and children of all nationalities who had fled from Paris and the north as the Germans swiftly conquered the country. In our party were forty-two—some, like myself, American citizens, who had been working with the French Ministry of Information. Jean Fraysse, *chef de cabinet* of Albert Sarraut, Minister of the Interior in the Reynaud government, was my superior. He was president of Paris Mondiale, the government short-wave radio station, and he had taken me on during the first week of war as his administrative assistant.

Later that afternoon, after Pétain's announcement of his plea for terms from the Nazis, I sat on the terrace of a café in the Place de la Comédie with an artist friend of mine from Paris, Marie Louise Bousquet. We held each other's

hand and wept together as we watched the last free French airplanes flying low over Bordeaux, almost shaving the rooftops, dipping their wings in farewell as they flew out over the harbor on their way to England.

The night of Pétain's broadcast I dined in the Place de la Comédie with Jean Fraysse and some of our French staff. There were some of us who still refused to believe that the fight was over, and we discussed moving French radio propaganda to Martinique. Our plan was put up to Charles Pomaret, new Minister of the Interior in Pétain's government. We asked Pomaret for transportation to Martinique and the guaranty of a sum of money sufficient to enable us to continue short-wave propaganda for France from there. Pomaret was unable to arrange matters for us, but though we were disappointed at the time, this lucky chance saved us from jumping out of the Pétain frying pan into the fire of Vice-Admiral Robert, who would undoubtedly have thrown us into jail.

All around us that evening in Bordeaux were refugees arguing about Pétain's broadcast. It had come as a complete surprise that France was asking for an armistice, and the news that the fight was to stop had stunned most of the people. Some had expected and hoped that Pétain would tell them that the government was going to North Africa to continue the fight for freedom along with their British ally. Others were content, for there are always people who prefer peace at any price. But nobody was happy in the crowds that walked up and down in front of the terrace and jammed the tables in the Place de la Comédie, talking ex-



citedly about the news. There were people who immediately repudiated Pétain's idea that it was necessary to stop fighting. And, already, in the cafés of Bordeaux there was talk, some of it bravado, all of it earnest, of resistance to the Marshal's orders and to those of the German conquerors.

Fighting was still going on to the north of us. The Nazis took their time about answering Pétain's plea, and when Hitler's terms for capitulation finally came, they were so drastic that Pétain's new government did not dare to make them public at once. We got the bad news from BBC broadcasts out of London on June 23. This was how the French people first learned what was to happen to them. The Germans demanded the right to occupy the most heavily populated part of France, where its main natural resources and industry were located. The cost of that occupation was to be paid for by the French people. All German refugees in France were to be handed over to the Nazis. All French prisoners of war in Germany were to remain there, and prisoners of war in German hands in France were to remain prisoners of war working for the Germans. There were other details, but these were the main things that interested the crowds who were packed into Bordeaux. They knew now that they were going to have to live, most of them, surrounded by German troops until the defeat of Germany or the defeat of her last remaining enemy, Great Britain. They knew that they were going to have to support their enemies. The most miserable people in Bordeaux were the refugees from Nazism, the Jews and others, who understood better than the rest of us the terror that was in store

for all of us and the horror that was in store for them. Hundreds of thousands of French families now realized, too, that for the duration of the war they were not going to see their husbands, sons, and brothers, who would remain slaves in Germany or in German hands.

Some days later I received cables in Bordeaux from my father and my father-in-law in the United States, urging me to return home and assuring me that transportation was available for me in Lisbon. But I did not want to leave France. My husband, Jacques Tarti re, was now in England, where he was a liaison officer between the French forces and the British Army. So long as he was still in Europe, I, too, wanted to remain, and I felt that I could be more useful by staying in France than joining him in England, at least until I could hear from him what his future plans were. I had lived and worked in France long enough to feel involved with it and now I was interested in the talk I began to hear in the Bordeaux caf s after P tain's speech. This talk was of plans for the publication of propaganda against the Nazis and of the best ways to organize sabotage of the German military machine that had overrun the country. These plans were still indefinite, but the will was there to carry them out, and some men and women were trying to discover with whom they could work and whom they could trust.

I had gone to live in Paris for the first time early in 1939. My husband had gone to the north of Sweden a short time before, to make scenes for a film in which he was appearing with Michele Morgan, called *La Piste du Nord* (Route to

the North). I had met Jacques in New York in 1937. I was working there in a musical show produced by the WPA Theatre Project, for I had grown weary of the part of the blonde heroine in Charlie Chan mysteries to which I had been confined in Hollywood. Between my Hollywood career and my WPA experience I had been on the stage in New York in various productions, including Lynn Riggs' fine play, *Green Grow the Lilacs*. Jacques had been visiting his father and his stepmother, an American woman, in Middleburg, Virginia. He was a good-looking, tall man, twenty-six years old, six years younger than I. He had been educated in England as well as France and spoke English perfectly. Soon after we met I received an offer to appear in motion pictures in England, and he received an offer from a French moving-picture company. We sailed for Europe in February, 1938. In England I played parts in mystery movies again, and also played a part in Clifford Odets' *Golden Boy*, which the Group Theatre was producing in London. That fall, Jacques came over to London, and we were married there the day before Munich.

As Jacques' lungs were weak, we left Paris and spent the summer of 1939 in the little town of Cassis, about thirty kilometers from Marseilles, where we were when war was declared. We heard the fatal news over the radio in the small dining room of the Hôtel des Roches Blanches, where frightened and nervous French men and women listened tensely to the announcement of the second world war in their lifetime. We started back to Paris as soon as possible and rode in a train jammed with soldiers who looked piti-

fully ill-equipped for the ordeal they were going to endure. Many of them wore carpet slippers in place of boots. Civilians, grief-stricken and panicky, crowded into every inch of space available in the corridors of the railroad cars, and some even clung to supports on the outside of the cars, as the train moved slowly north.

In Paris, Jacques, who had been turned down three times by the French Army because of his lungs, managed, because he knew English so well, to be accepted for liaison work with the British troops who were beginning to arrive in Brittany. Meantime, Denise Tual, a theatrical and motion-picture agent in Paris, who was then working for the French government, asked me to do radio work for the French Ministry of Information. It was she who introduced me to Jean Fraysse, whose assistant I became, and that association was to result later in my taking part in the resistance movement.

Jean Fraysse was thirty-four years old when I met him. He had the dark eyes and black hair of the people of the Auvergne, and his temperament was sensitive and intense. His intellect was brilliant and his courage superb, but he needed the constant support of people who believed in his work and in his ability to carry it through. Before the war he had been a poet and, along with Paul Eluard and Max Jacob, one of the editors of a literary review in Paris.

My work at the Paris Mondiale studio was varied. I arranged with Americans in Paris to make broadcasts to the United States in the interests of France. I helped to produce variety programs, commentaries, and other broadcasts,

and I took parts in some of these myself. We used for our commentaries and varieties such assorted personages as Vincent Sheean and Mistinguette, Dorothy Thompson and Cécile Sorel. We put on scenes from famous French classics, and we broadcast a serial called *Mr. and Mrs. Claude Dauphin*, which portrayed the life of a typical French family in wartime Paris. Once a week Colette gave a fine *causerie* for Americans. She spoke beautifully of the atmosphere of Paris during the first months of the war, its somberness, and the reactions of the Parisians, who had suddenly become acutely conscious of the beauties of their city, now that they were fearful of losing it. Colette used to come across Paris through the blackout at three o'clock in the morning in her St. Tropez sandals to make these broadcasts. We were on the air to North America continuously from one in the morning Paris time until six, the best listening hours in the United States.

My daily life at this time was highly irregular. I usually got to bed about six in the morning and rose again around ten-thirty to go over to the Ministry of Information for our instructions on material to be used and material to be censored. At lunch I saw many of the people with whom I was making arrangements to do broadcasts for us. In the afternoons I often went to the Chamber of Deputies to listen to the debates. The situation was too confusing for me to understand it clearly, even with the aid of Jean Fraysse as interpreter, for the French government seemed to be reformed almost daily during this spring of 1940, and the oratory I heard was bombastic and intense. Later in the day

I took some rest and then went to the studio to rehearse our programs. Around eleven at night there was another lax period, and I could go home or visit friends. There was always the depressing and fearful blackout, and there was always the foul air of the crowded broadcasting studios back of the Gare Montparnasse. We had no such things as air-conditioning, and our equipment was so old that there were frequent mechanical breakdowns.

While I was working at Paris Mondiale in these early days of the war, I used to spend some of my spare time helping out my friend Louise Macy, who with Isabel Kemp, another American, was doing strenuous work for the hordes of refugees who were beginning to pour into the Gare Montparnasse from invaded Belgium. The large, gray, dismal railroad station was a mass of misery. I saw grandmothers holding dead babies in their arms, women with parts of their faces shot away, and insane women who had lost their children, their husbands, and all reason for living. Some of these Belgian peasants would suddenly remember the many things they had been forced to leave undone on their property, the cattle untended, the dogs unfed, and then they would let out screams of rage and despair, which resounded through the big bare station. Louise Macy and Isabel Kemp were kept busy day and night changing babies' diapers, bandaging the wounded, and tending the sick. The stench, the filth, and the grief that filled the Gare Montparnasse during those difficult weeks were almost unbearable.

The first testimony to German cruelty was brought to

Paris by these refugees. One old woman told us that at a railroad station the Germans had ordered the frantic refugees to get into a waiting train. As some of them eagerly started for what they thought a means of escape, the Germans wantonly mowed them down with machine guns. En route their railroad cars had often been bombed by the Germans, though they were scarcely military objectives, and whole carloads of the dead bodies which were collected had been pushed off onto sidings, where the corpses lay unburied. I arranged for some of our radio writers to go to the Gare Montparnasse and take down accounts of some of these Belgian refugees for our broadcasts to America.

As the refugees from invaded Belgium poured into Paris, we realized that the so-called "phony" war was over, and that horror had begun in earnest. During the period of "phony" war people had quieted down considerably and went about their routine business. Now, however, in May, French soldiers began to arrive from the front with tales of the disaster and disorganization which were rapidly turning into complete demoralization.

I was witness to an example of this disaster and demoralization right in Paris at this time. I had had to learn French fast when my work began, for I could hardly understand a word when I first went to meetings at the Ministry of Information, and, a couple of months after war broke out, I had started to take lessons from Mlle. Kogan, who was well known to Americans who studied French in Paris. She was a tiny, frail woman who lived with her mother in the Avenue Kléber. When Americans left Paris for the United

States in large numbers during the first weeks of war, Mlle. Kogan lost most of her pupils, and she asked Louise Macy and me, who continued to take our lessons, to pay her two months in advance. She was a very exacting teacher and an excellent one, who made us do our homework faithfully and gave us a good grounding in French. After the first air raid on Paris in 1940, when the Germans bombed the Passy district, wiped out many residences, and killed a great many people, Mlle. Kogan left the city with her mother, who, Mlle. Kogan had told me, was a sort of Svengali to her Trilby. Soon afterwards, the mother died somewhere in the provinces, and, since there was a law against moving bodies back into Paris, Mlle. Kogan returned alone to her large apartment in the Avenue Kléber. She was never the same after she got back. She had lost her great powers of concentration, and she seemed depressed and full of fright. One day in January she telephoned me and told my maid Nadine that she had cut her thumb badly, asking that I get her a doctor and come at once myself. I telephoned to a doctor and went to Mlle. Kogan's apartment. When I arrived there, I found her alone. There was no cut on her thumb. She grabbed my arm and said, "Don't leave me, you mustn't leave me!" I told her that I had to get back to the radio station, and when she realized that I was trying to go away, she opened her desk drawer and pulled out a good-sized kitchen knife. I jumped up and ran down the dark hallway toward the kitchen, thinking there was an exit that way, with Mlle. Kogan following me, brandishing her knife. As I went from room to room in the empty apartment I tried



to lock doors, but there were no locks. In the bathroom Mlle. Kogan caught up with me and I gave her a quick push. I managed to get to the front door before she had picked herself up and held the door shut while I shouted for help. The concierge came running upstairs and told me that the Austrian doctor whom I had sent had told her that Mlle. Kogan was insane and to get an ambulance. He himself had not dared to wait, for, as a refugee, he was not permitted to practice medicine in France. I held the door shut on Mlle. Kogan until the ambulance arrived and the attendants took her away, screaming and fighting. Not long afterwards Mlle. Kogan's brother came to see me, since I had been among the last people to see his sister before she was put in an asylum. When I told him that she had no money, he was surprised and showed me her bankbooks, which indicated that she had more than 400,000 francs. I recalled that she had always carried a jewel box around with her in her apartment and kept it constantly beside her when she gave me lessons, for fear that there would be an *alerte*. It had been full of money.

As the news from the front became more alarming every day, we kept automobiles and a bus at Paris Mondiale, ready to evacuate our staff. There was more and more evidence during these first days of June that the Germans were not far off. One night when I was on my way home from the broadcasting station to the Rue Vital, I saw street-sweeping machines spread out all the way down the center of the Champs Élysées. This was calculated, I learned, to prevent the landing of small airplanes along that broad avenue.

On the morning of June 10 we remained in the broadcasting studio with our bags packed, waiting for instructions to leave Paris. The government had already fled to Tours, but the Ministry of Information still insisted that we would not evacuate Paris. When we went round to the Ministry's offices later that day, however, we discovered that it, too, had fled. Next morning our forty-two assorted nationals packed themselves and their necessary luggage into the automobiles we had been able to obtain, and at about ten o'clock our sad and weary group started in a doleful caravan from the studio building. As we passed the Gare Montparnasse, I noticed that as far as the eye could see, the streets around the station were one mass of people with their belongings, trying to get on trains going anywhere out of Paris. The day was stifling, and there were panic, misery, and anxiety wherever one looked. On the road out of the city people were pushing baby carriages or pulling small carts, others were on loaded bicycles, and some were walking, carrying their children and their valises. Some were moving their families and possessions in wagons drawn by oxen. Farther on, we saw dead bodies on the side of the road, French men, women, and children who had been machine-gunned by German Stukas. Cars were lying in ditches, overturned, and men and women stood near them, weeping. The fields were full of red poppies, blue cornflowers, and waving wheat.

At dawn next day we started down the Loire toward Tours, after camping our first night in a grove of trees out-

side of Orléans, in the pouring rain, surrounded by the nondescript cars and possessions of other refugees. Our bodies were stiff and grimy, and we quickly began to feel our fatigue. In Tours the only available sleeping quarters were in a group of bordellos which the police requisitioned for us, giving the girls two hours' notice to clear out. We did some short-wave broadcasting that night to America by sending our commentaries to the radio station from telephone booths in the local telephone station. These broadcasts gave whatever late news was available and described the misery of the refugees on the roads. When I got back to the bordello where we were billeted, I found my Alsatian maid, Nadine, sitting stiffly in a corner of our room. She refused to sleep in one of those unchaste beds, but I was too tired to worry about who had used the beds last.

In Tours there was even greater panic than in Paris, and no one seemed to know whether the government intended to stay there or to go farther south. One afternoon in Tours I went to government headquarters to pick up Jean Fraysse. I parked my car directly behind one in which Hélène de Portes, Paul Reynaud's mistress, was waiting. On the pavement outside French headquarters Lord Gort and General Ironside, of the British General Staff, were standing. Reynaud, the last Premier of France before its collapse, came rushing out of the building. He saw the British generals, who tried to talk with him, but he told them he had something important to do and jumped into the car where Mme. de Portes was waiting. Lord Gort and General Ironside made some sharp remarks about French government lead-

ers, not realizing that I could both understand what they were saying and appreciate their sentiments.

Next morning when Jean and I returned to the building housing the Ministry of Information, we found the old white house with doors and windows wide open and nobody inside. We learned that the government had fled in the night to Bordeaux and had left neither instructions nor information. We packed up and went on to Bordeaux. Some of our French secretaries who had never before been outside of Paris enjoyed the variety of this trip, but for the rest of us it was a heartbreaking, pitiful journey in defeat.

After we reached Bordeaux, one of our first tasks was to get some of the members of our broadcasting staff out of France. Some of them were Englishmen who, after Pétain's capitulation, suddenly became enemy aliens. Others were men and women whose religion or politics were distasteful to the Nazis. Some, including myself, had been denounced on the German radio. The Nazis had threatened five times in their programs in French to France that if they caught me, the American actress, Drue Leyton, they would give me the death penalty.

From the Bordeaux radio station we sent out frantic pleas for help for France, and we tried to give people across the Atlantic some picture of the wretchedness of the refugees who were pouring into the temporary capital of France. We described the machine-gunning of these refugees on the clogged roads by low-flying German planes, and we told of the misery of the men and women who were arriving in the atmosphere of panic and confusion which

was prevalent in Bordeaux. Late every afternoon a heartsick mob, the new population of the town, jammed into the three large cafés in the Place de la Comédie, or walked restlessly up and down outside those establishments, seeking news, waiting for the opportunity to escape, or hoping to return to their homes.

One night after our arrival in Bordeaux there was an air raid. The attack started about one-thirty in the morning, soon after we had begun our broadcasts to the United States. Smitty, an American soldier of fortune, who had been sent to me in Paris by the American Legion for a job as an announcer, was on the air. He screamed into the microphone, "Hear that, America, the God-damned sons of bitches are bombing us now!" Those were the last words to America that morning as our station went off the air.

## II

AFTER PÉTAIN's capitulation it was impossible to do any more broadcasting from Bordeaux. With the aid of the American authorities at Hendaye, on the Spanish border, we succeeded in getting out of France the Englishmen and others for whom it meant imprisonment and possibly worse to remain in the country. As an American citizen, married to a Frenchman, I had the right to remain.

The atmosphere in Bordeaux was so confusing, with forces of capitulation quickly going to work, and forces of resistance in embryo, that Jean Fraysse decided to move on to Toulouse, where he thought it might still be possible

to organize some more effective resistance to the Nazis. Since I had now decided to remain in France and had already been working with Jean for some time, I determined to follow his example. I took Nadine, my maid, and my French poodle called "Ondie," the French word for short-wave, and went with him in my car to Toulouse.

Nadine and I rested en route at an inn in Cahuzac. Soldiers from the defeated French armies were wandering in hordes in this region. A group of them arrived at our inn, and they were so enraged that Nadine and I were frightened. We locked ourselves in our room that night and heard them in the dining room below, cursing the government and smashing wine bottles. "How could we fight?" they kept demanding. "The filthy government wouldn't support us! The Boches just mowed us down!" Some of the mass of infuriated and frustrated Frenchmen, like these soldiers, ended by accepting the Germans because of their contempt for their own leaders, but many of them sought revenge against both their conquerors and their betrayers.

In Toulouse we saw little more chance to establish propaganda activity for a free France than in Bordeaux, so Jean Fraysse decided that we should go to Vichy, where the seat of the new government had now begun to be established, and where we could learn something of its complexion and attitudes. Though gasoline was getting scarce, we had no trouble getting all we needed, for Jean signed official requisitions and we stamped them with the Paris Mondiale radio seal.

We arrived in Vichy, the beautiful French watering place

along the river Allier, on July 12. The town was the scene of intrigue, suspicion, and confusion. Ministers and ex-ministers of France's government paced up and down the paths in the parc all day long rather than remain in their offices, where they were subject to constant espionage. They carried on their confidential business in the woods leading to the thermal springs, and it was a common sight to see cabinet ministers step out suddenly from behind trees and separate whenever strangers came near. But they had more to fear than espionage. Some Frenchmen who did not accept the Pétain policies and mentality were beginning to take resistance into their own hands. One evening when Jean and I were walking along the bank of the Allier, bullets from a revolver whizzed past our heads, probably aimed at Pierre-Étienne Flandin, notorious appeaser of the Germans, who happened to be walking near by. Pierre Laval, new Vice-Premier of the Pétain government and its Foreign Minister, who was the leading pro-German of them all, was shot at on another occasion while we were in Vichy. We thus had tangible evidence that the pro-Germans in France were not going to have it all their own way. Shortly afterwards, however, we also got tangible evidence from the lips of Pierre Laval himself of how hard they were going to try.

At Vichy Jean looked up his friend Georges Hilaire, who was now Laval's right-hand man. Hilaire found us quarters in a charming auberge on the bank of the Allier, where some of the Vichy government people were staying and where there were also some men who later became leaders

in the French resistance movement. Georges Hilaire suggested to Jean that he become director of Vichy Radio. Jean refused on the grounds of his health, which was indeed very bad. He was suffering intense pain as a result of an injury he had received some years before when he was thrown by a horse, and while we were en route to Vichy and after our arrival there, he kept running a high temperature. We found a doctor, who said that Jean needed an operation as soon as possible and told us that there was danger that cancer might develop from his injury.

Hilaire invited us to dine with Pierre Laval at the Hôtel du Parc one evening. Laval, a sullen, morose man, gave Jean Fraysse, whom he had known in Paris, his views on the future of France, to which we had to listen with an appearance of respect.

"The only hope for this country," Laval said, "is a firm alliance with Germany. England has always used us for her own political purposes. The Americans are only interested in exploiting us economically. Americans are never interested in anything but their beloved dollar."

"You might keep your insults against Americans for some time when I am not at the table," I suggested. "I am an American citizen, and I have never had any reason to regret it."

"Pardon, Madame," Laval said politely. "I have some very good friends in America, and I have nothing against Americans as such, but I was against the American war-debt policy of the last war, and America has made many enemies in France because of her greed."



Jean Fraysse changed the subject to a discussion of Laval's ideas on propaganda for the French people. Laval told him that hereafter anyone working for the French government must understand that the new policy was designed to bring France into the closest possible accord with Germany. This was no great surprise, for it was well known that Pierre Laval had been pro-German, and it was now even more obvious that he was thoroughly determined to play the Nazi game in France. As the years of the war dragged on, Laval became France's Public Enemy No. 1, the greatest friend the Nazis had in the government that pretended to represent France from the Nazi outpost of Vichy. Even at this time, we were told, Laval was not satisfied that Pétain himself was sufficiently pro-German. From this talk, and from his talks with other Vichy officials, Jean realized that those who were planning resistance to the Nazis could only expect enmity and punishment from the new regime.

The complexion of the government and its personnel were changing daily in Vichy. Some former French officials were escaping to North Africa, and others were escaping into the Pétain government. Wherever you went in Vichy, people treated you suspiciously. No one came up to you in that town any longer and greeted you with a cordial "*Mon vieux*, how are you?" Everybody was silently speculating, "What are you?" No one was sure of the loyalty of anyone, and politics was like a high-tension wire strung through the life of the community.

Soon after we arrived in Vichy I went to the American Embassy to see Mr. Wallner, whom I had met at the Em-

bassy in Paris. Admiral Leahy had not yet arrived to take up his duties as our ambassador. In American Embassy circles there was great disgust with the French in general, though some of the officials had sympathy with the plight of the people. I discussed with them the chances of resistance to the Nazis, and they were of the opinion that it was hopeless to expect any further exhibition of spirit in France. There was so much confusion, uncertainty, and lack of hope in this new center of French government that I felt for a time like obeying the injunctions of my family and returning to the United States.

At the Embassy they gave me a letter that my husband, Jacques Tarti re, had written me from Tower-on-Trent, England, where he was serving with the 12th Lancers. He had been on the expedition against Norway in April, 1940, and had been forced to evacuate after the dismal failure of that attempt to stem the Nazi tide. In his letter he told me that he did not believe that his country would go down. He believed, and he asked me to believe too, that what de Gaulle had said was absolutely true: France had lost a battle, but not the war. He added that that was the attitude of any good Frenchman. He wrote that he thought I must still be in France because in England he had received frantic cables from his family and mine, urging him to persuade me to leave at once. He said that he thought I ought to go home, but I was sure that if he knew all the circumstances he would not have thought so.

Ever since the outbreak of the war I had become intensely interested in doing whatever I could to defeat the

Nazis, and, like my husband, I still could not believe that France was finished. Even after the depressing spectacle of Vichy, I was still convinced that the best place for me to continue the fight was in France, as long as I was permitted to stay there. My new associations had given me new interests, and I could not bring myself to abandon them now for a life on the stage and in motion pictures, which no longer attracted me. The real excitement and the real opportunity to help seemed to be in France, and under the circumstances my best course of action seemed to be to cast my lot with Jean Fraysse. From Vichy I cabled to Jacques' father in Virginia that it was impossible for me to leave at this time, because I had to arrange our personal business affairs in Paris, if I could get permission to return there, and I also informed my own family of my intention. Those were the last messages I was able to get to the United States until the Americans liberated Paris four years later, and I was never again able to communicate with my husband.

Georges Hilaire advised Jean to get out of Vichy soon. His refusal to take over direction of Vichy Radio had cast some suspicion on him in this community where so many French officials were already thoroughly pro-Nazi. Moreover, there was reason for getting back to Paris as fast as possible, for Jean's injury required medical attention at once, and if he had to have a serious operation, he wanted to have it in Paris, where he knew many people and where he could spend the period of recuperation in a less foreign atmosphere, despite the presence there of German occupa-

tion troops. Hilaire, who admired Jean Fraysse and probably thought he might some day be a powerful man in France, got us the necessary passes to cross the line of demarcation between unoccupied and occupied territory. He obtained for me a certificate signed by German officials attesting that I was too ill to return to the United States and had to get back to Paris.

Jean, Nadine, and I left Vichy in my car early on a warm, lovely August day. En route we saw the ruins of some buildings that had been destroyed in the fighting and the avenues of trees that had been cut down to be used for the obstacles which failed to stop the onrushing Germans. But despite these few evidences of the ravages of war, we enjoyed our drive, for we were glad to be leaving the sinister atmosphere of Vichy, even though we did not know what to expect when we got back to Paris.

At Moulin we passed the German control between unoccupied and occupied France. Tall, blond, impressive-looking Germans stood guard at this border of the division of France. They strutted with an air of self-importance and seemed thoroughly conscious of their own strength in relation to the weakness of the people they believed they had just crushed for a thousand years. They were trying at the same time to be very "correct."

We reached the outskirts of Paris just before eight-thirty that night. Long lines of automobiles waited to pass through the German control. Here the papers of the occupants of cars were examined minutely, and here the Germans did

not bother to be so "correct." They shouted at the frightened French people whose papers were not exactly in order and held up many cars filled with mothers and small children. I heard later that these people had to remain outside the city until all the exact formalities of the rigid German regulations had been complied with. As our papers were in order we received permission to proceed.

Sandbags rested lugubriously against the dark buildings along the desolate streets of Paris. Most of the streets were barred with wooden barriers, for the Germans had kept open only a few main thoroughfares. Signs in bold, black German marked the directions for Nazi trucks and staff cars. The city was completely blacked-out, and the only people we saw on the streets were German guards here and there at intersections. They yelled harshly if anyone happened to turn down the wrong street. This was the only sound breaking the ghostly silence on the journey along the shining asphalt avenues. We did not say a word to one another as the car moved slowly into the city from the Porte d'Italie.

We reached my house on the Rue Vital a little after nine on the night of August 17 and were relieved to find that nothing had been disturbed. Before I had left Paris when the Germans were approaching, I had obtained from the officials of the American Embassy a seal to put on the outside of the house declaring it to be the property of an American citizen. It was a great comfort to be able once again to sleep in clean sheets and live among things that were my own. Though we were worried about

what the future might bring, that night at least we enjoyed much-needed, relaxing hot baths and slept soundly.

Next morning Nadine went to market to get us food and to find out what people were saying about the Germans. Many houses in our quarter had been occupied by the military forces. Shopkeepers told her that the Germans had been very "correct," and that except for the houses they had formally requisitioned no other property had been disturbed or looted. There was still plenty of bread, butter, and cheese in the market, but fresh eggs, fresh vegetables, and meat were scarce. I put in a stock of canned peas, string beans, tomato juice, noodles, and macaroni.

That afternoon I went to look up Jean Molet in the little hotel room he occupied at 27 Rue Jacob. He had been secretary to Jean Fraysse at Paris Mondiale and night director of radio operations. Molet was a man about sixty, known as "Baron" Molet to his many friends, because he looked like one's idea of a baron. He had the nose of a Bourbon, was short, dapper, and always wore a monocle. When we had evacuated Paris Mondiale to go south with the government, the "Baron" had insisted on remaining. He said that as he was an old man, the Germans were unlikely to harm him.

Molet now told me that a flock of Germans had come to our radio station back of the Gare Montparnasse within an hour after the Nazis entered Paris. Jean Fraysse had left instructions to destroy the control board, but the Germans had managed to put it in working order within six hours after they took over. Molet had been able to destroy part

of the correspondence and many of the scripts signed by well-known people, as well as other compromising documents, but he had not finished the job before the Germans arrived. They ordered him to touch nothing and kept him a prisoner in the radio station for two days. Though Molet had burned all of Jean Fraysse's correspondence and some other dangerous material, we could never be sure how much the Germans had got their hands on and how much they knew of our past activities.

I suggested that "Baron" Molet stay in my house in the Rue Vital, for he was both helpful and companionable. We felt that our house was being watched, but we did not know whether the men who stood around outside were shadowing us or someone else in the same street.

Next door to my house was the dance studio of Serge Lifar. One day shortly after our return to Paris, the "Baron" hurried into my room and told me to come quickly to the window. I looked out through the blinds and Molet pointed to a large German car in front of the house next door. Serge Lifar got out of it, accompanied by several Nazi officers. Lifar, who had been the friend of Serge Diaghilev, head of the famous Russian Ballet, was now the friend of Field Marshal Goering, head of the Luftwaffe. He was seen often at Maxim's, the de luxe hangout of high-ranking Nazis, with Goering and others of the German High Command.

Soon after our return to Paris I went with Jean to the American Hospital. The direction of this institution had been taken over by Dr. Bergeret, who told us that Jean

must have an emergency operation at once and a major operation later.

Dr. Bergeret had succeeded Dr. Thierry de Martel as director of the American Hospital. Dr. de Martel had been one of the leading brain specialists of the world. He was my husband's uncle, and I had known him well. I now learned of his fate. Just before the Germans entered Paris Dr. de Martel discussed the situation with his good friend William C. Bullitt, the American Ambassador. Bullitt asked him to remain at his post as head of the American Hospital, and Dr. de Martel promised that he would do so. The day before the German troops entered Paris Dr. de Martel advised his staff members to leave their homes and live at the hospital, where he thought they would be safer. Then, as the Germans were entering the city he loved, he gave himself hypodermic injections of strychnine powerful enough to kill him. Next day Ambassador Bullitt received the following telegram from Dr. de Martel:

"I promised you not to leave Paris. I did not say if I would remain in Paris alive or dead. To remain living in Paris would be a *cheque barré* for our adversaries. If I remain here dead it is a check without any provisos. Adieu.  
Martel."



## II. *The Dawn of Resistance*

### I

JEAN FRAYSSE began his active resistance work while he was still in the hospital during the fall of 1940, recovering from his emergency operation. He followed with minute attention every publication the forces of collaboration were getting out, and he wrote answers to their arguments every day. In anonymous letters he expressed his opposition to the Vichy government's efforts to make France a satellite of Germany. I took down these articles at night, typed them, making as many carbon copies as I could on paper bought in the outskirts of Paris in order not to cause suspicion in my neighborhood. Then I dropped them into mailboxes, two or three only in each mailbox, in various parts of the

city. These anonymous articles were addressed to names Jean Fraysse gave me of people he wanted to inspire with confidence in resistance to the Nazis and faith in the renaissance of France.

In this work "Baron" Molet was indispensable to us. He used to sit in cafés and listen to the talk of the town. Then he would bring back to Jean Fraysse in the hospital a résumé of attitudes. Occasionally, as he sat in a café and heard collaborationist statements, Molet would get into arguments, and Jean and I were worried that he might be indiscreet. When I mentioned our fear to the "Baron," he said, "*Ma fille*, don't worry about me. I have lived in this country much longer than you have, and I know these people. When I tell you I've had an argument, realize that I am not being indiscreet. That is the way to draw these people out. In France we argue bitterly and then always end with, "*Au revoir, mon vieux, à bientôt.*"

The "Baron" was an excellent mimic, and he used to entertain Fraysse and me by re-enacting these café scenes. He cheered me up considerably during these blue days. These were anxious times for us personally because of Jean's illness and were days of despair for France because of the further Nazi successes in the war and the headway the Germans were making in Paris. Wherever we went now we had the feeling of being watched by Germans or their informers, and we knew that our telephones were being tapped. It was forbidden to listen to BBC broadcasts, but by keeping Nadine's radio downstairs going full blast, tuned in to music or the German radio, and tuning my portable upstairs very

low to the BBC wave lengths, we were able to get whatever crumbs of comfort London could give us during these desperate days.

One of Jean's former associates in the Ministry of Interior, Revilliod, was now secretary general of the Paris Prefecture of Police. He told us that it was imprudent of me to have come back to Paris, when I had been so close to the border and had had the opportunity to return to the United States. He felt that it was merely a matter of weeks before the United States would be in the war, and he warned me that then the Germans would intern me. I told him that officials of the American Embassy in Vichy had not given me the impression that the United States was so close to war, and Revilliod then warned me at least to be very careful whom I saw and how I expressed my views. He remarked that France had a very different regime now from any in its past history, and he told me that foreigners were highly suspect in Paris and all telephones in their names were being listened to day and night. Revilliod was very careful not to express either pro- or anti-German feelings; he told us that the Germans had been very "correct," and had not disturbed the Prefecture of Police; he felt that France needed law and order, and that the best thing he could do was stick to his post.

To avoid being picked up by the Germans or reported to the Gestapo by their growing collection of collaborators in Paris became a major undertaking during those first weeks after our return to occupied territory. It became clearer every day that one false step would land any one

of us in jail. I had my first close call in September. Mary Walker, an Englishwoman who had been a friend of my husband's family, telephoned me one day and made an appointment to come to see me. When she arrived at my house, she told me that she had not been interned along with the other English subjects because she had managed to arrange to work with the French Red Cross. She also hinted that she was working with British Intelligence. She was anxious to learn about the atmosphere in Vichy, and knowing that Jean had good connections with French government officials, she was eager to get all the information I could get for her. I told her what we had observed in Vichy of the pro-German attitude of the new French government and warned her that we must be very careful because we were reasonably certain that our house was being watched and that our telephone was tapped. I asked her not to come to see me again and never to telephone, assuring her that I would get in touch with her whenever it was possible to do so without arousing suspicion. She agreed, but a few days later, she telephoned again. Nadine answered, and I told her to say that I was very busy at the moment and would call back later.

That morning Nadine and I got on our bicycles and rode out to Suresnes, at the edge of the Bois de Boulogne. This was a factory district, and we had heard that there were meat and butter in the big market there. Also, we wanted to get our bicycles repaired at the Terrot bicycle factory in Suresnes. We had done our shopping and had full market baskets, and while waiting for our bicycles, we sat down in

a little café facing the large market sheds to have some coffee. This seemed to me a good time to return Mary Walker's telephone call, so I went into the telephone booth near our table and called her. She wanted to know how Jean was and told me that she might be leaving France soon. I asked her again never to telephone me at my house, said that I did not want to talk any more now, and told her I would see her in a few days.

Less than five minutes after I had hung up, the telephone rang in the booth. The waiter answered it, and I heard him say, as he looked at Nadine and me, "Yes, they both have accents." He quickly put up the telephone, came running over to the *patronne* of the café, who was sitting at her *caisse*, and said nervously, "I'll be right back. I have to get a *sergent de ville*." The *patronne* looked over at us, wild-eyed. I got up and said to Nadine, "Come on, we're getting out of here."

We got out on the steps of the café with our big market baskets. I quickly took off my raincoat and beret and stuffed them into Nadine's basket. I told her to run to the Terrot factory, get a bicycle whether it was finished or not, cross the bridge as fast as she could, and make for home. I told her that I would follow at the lunch hour when many workmen crossed the bridge, where there was a control. I realized that we had to separate, for one dark woman and one blonde would be too easy to identify. I also told Nadine that if I didn't show up at home before long to call Jean's friend Revilliod at the Prefecture of Police, who had offered to help me in any way he could, and tell him that I

had been arrested. Then I hurried into the open-air market place which filled the whole square. It was crowded with people, and I managed quickly to become part of the crowd, where I walked around looking at goods but not daring to open my mouth. I saw the little café waiter come into the market with three *sergents de ville* and hurry through the crowd, looking for me. Without my raincoat and with my blonde hair hanging down instead of tucked under my beret, I looked different, and he didn't recognize me.

I waited in the market until the noon whistle blew and workmen began to start home across the bridge. Then I went to the bicycle factory, got my wheel, which had been repaired, and crossed the bridge along with the crowd. There were six gendarmes guarding the bridge, but they paid no attention to me. Fortunately, it was pouring rain, and the *sergents de ville* whom the waiter had summoned were not eager to pursue anyone far in that weather. I pedaled fast and got as far as the Route des Moulins in the Longchamp race course, when to my amazement I saw Nadine standing under a tree in the pouring rain, weeping. I lost my temper and told her she could have got both of us into serious trouble by not obeying me and going straight home. She had been too upset to go any farther, for she was sure that something awful must have happened to me.

We bicycled home as fast as we could. The ride from Suresnes took about an hour, and when we got back to the Rue Vital, we fell through the door, drenched and white. I told Molet of our experience and said that I was going to move out of Paris as soon as possible into the suburbs

in the country. In addition to the fact that we felt so unsafe in these surroundings, it would be cheaper to live in the country, and I knew that Jean would require convalescence in a healthier atmosphere.

While I was in Vichy, a childhood friend of mine in California, Helen Hoke Woodward, had cabled me \$500, and I now received notice from the American Embassy in Paris that another \$500 had been sent me by the same friend. I went to the Embassy to get this remittance and to find out if there was any mail for me. George, the old colored man who served as doorman at the American Embassy, took my bicycle when I arrived in front of the door, and locked it up for me in the rack outside. Meanwhile, a German staff car with Nazi officers had arrived in front of the Embassy. George, who spoke excellent German as well as French, for he had been attached to our Embassy in Berlin, lingered over my bicycle and said to me, "If I stay here long enough, I won't have to open the door for those *salauds!*"

At the Embassy I was received by one of the secretaries whom I had not previously known. The Embassy staff was changing daily. Some were being sent to Vichy, some to Africa, and others to Switzerland. New secretaries and secretarial help had been taken in, and one had to be on guard, for one could never be sure now who was collaborating with the Germans even inside our own Embassy. One whispered when one talked in the American Embassy in those days in the fall of 1940. I felt my way with this new official, and I could see that he was cautious until he could be sure

what my sentiments were. He had before him a cable from my husband's father in Virginia, forwarded from Vichy, insisting that they send me to the United States. He showed it to me, and I told him that I did not intend to return. He asked where my husband was, and I told him that he was in England and added, "I feel pretty safe in saying that to you, because I know you are an American. I do not usually tell people in Paris that my husband is still fighting for France." He was pleased at my frankness, for he had a cable telling him where my husband was which conformed with my own statement. I had a hunch that this man was both reliable and sympathetic, and I decided to take a big chance and tell him that I intended to work in resistance to the Germans, for Jean and I could use a contact in the Embassy. On his desk he had some copies of *Le Matin* and other collaborationist journals, and after I confided in him, he burst out, "Look at this stuff! All these lovely people will pay for their treachery some day." He told me the names of some of the leading Parisian journalists who were now collaborators, and he said that the personnel of *Paris-Soir*, formerly the most enterprising journal in Paris, was now in the hands of its former elevator boy, Joseph Schliess, an Alsatian, who suddenly appeared in a Nazi uniform the day the Germans entered Paris. As we talked in the American Embassy I could see Nazi officers in a room across the way at the Hôtel Crillon, their headquarters. It was strange to be discussing resistance while they were working so hard and so near to fasten themselves on the country.

This anti-Nazi official in the American Embassy offered



to introduce me to a Paris journalist who was organizing resistance work. I told him that I preferred not to meet anyone like that alone and suggested that I bring Jean Fraysse around to the Embassy so that the contact could be made through him. The official agreed with this proposal, and a short time later I got word to come to the Embassy with Jean. We borrowed a car from Revilliod, of the Prefecture of Police, and went to the Embassy. George, the doorman, looked at us sulkily when we drove up in an automobile, for he suspected that if we had a car we must be collaborators who had got it from the Germans. I explained that my companion was very ill and that the car belonged to the Prefecture, and George was cordial again at once.

Inside the Embassy Jean did not give his name, for the Gestapo could check up on every Frenchman who signed the registry book at the American Embassy. The Embassy was crowded at this time with people who were trying to get visas for the United States, particularly French Jews trying to escape Nazi anti-Semitism. We were quickly ushered into the office of the man I had talked with previously. After some conversation with Jean, he realized how well informed a Frenchman he was and that he knew the right people in journalism and public affairs. Jean hoped to get permission to send out information in the American Embassy pouch on the French government situation, but our friend did not dare to take such a chance. He gave Jean the name, address, and telephone number of the journalist he had wished to bring me in contact with, and arranged

for a meeting between the two men at a café within a few days. This Embassy official was very pleased with our determination to join resistance work, and he warned me against seeing and talking with Americans, explaining that among us there were many who were anti-Semitic and antidemocratic and were showing all the instincts of the perfect collaborator with the Nazis.

## II

WHEN I WAS looking for a place in the country, I thought first of Barbizon, the village on the edge of the Forest of Fontainebleau, where I had spent happy weeks with my husband and his family in 1939. My father-in-law had taken the Château de Fortoisseau, about eight kilometers from Barbizon, and when he left for America, he loaned some of its furniture to an American woman married to the Marquis de Podestad. He had told me that any time I wanted it, I should ask Alice de Podestad for it. Now I needed both a house and furniture, so I went to see Alice de Podestad and asked her whether the house she had occupied in Barbizon was free. If it was, I told her I would like to rent it. She told me that I was welcome to it but that I had better act quickly, for just four days before, she had received word from the mayor of Barbizon requesting the keys to the Villa L'Écureuil and saying that the Germans intended to occupy it.

Early next morning I took the train to Melun, the railroad junction twelve kilometers from Barbizon. I took my

bicycle on the train and rode over to Barbizon. Here I stopped at the house of Garnier, the old caretaker of the Villa L'Écureuil and a few other houses in the neighborhood, to see what the situation was. He told me that he didn't think I had a chance to get the villa, for M. Pochard, the mayor, had already turned the place over to the Germans. I asked Garnier what the attitude of the German commandant in Barbizon was, and he answered, "I don't know any bad stories about him. He seems to be very 'correct.'" Garnier agreed to go with me to the mayor's office and then to see the German commandant. It was the first time I was going to negotiate with a German officer, and I was nervous about the outcome.

We went first to the *mairie*, where M. Pochard, a tall, stiff, retired military man in his sixties, received me coldly. He had been a colonel in the French Army and believed in carrying out his orders to the letter, even though they were the orders of Nazis. When I told him that I was taking the Villa L'Écureuil and wanted the keys to it, he replied that that was impossible, since the Germans had already requisitioned it. He requested to see my *carte d'identité* and asked why I wanted the house. I told him that the furniture in the house belonged to me and that I had a friend who was very ill, Jean Fraysse, who was coming there to convalesce. I added that my husband, Jacques Tartièrre, was also ill and might be coming to Barbizon for the same purpose.

"It is too late," the mayor said, "the keys are already in the hands of the German commandant." He was unsympathetic and indifferent to my problems.

"You, a Frenchman, prefer to have Germans in that house rather than me?" I asked.

"Madame," he answered, "France is now under a military government—the occupying German Army. I am following the orders of Marshal Pétain. The Germans are 'correct' with me. I am 'correct' with them. And I don't like it when an American woman comes into my office and says she owns the earth and tells me my duty is thus and so!"

It was obvious that nothing more could be done here, so Garnier and I left the mayor's office and went to the center of the village, where the headquarters of the German commandant was located. Two young German soldiers, who spoke neither French nor English, were very polite to me when I arrived. They made it clear that the commandant would be there shortly and asked me to sit down and wait. As I glanced about the room, I noticed a board with keys and labels attached to them on the wall, and among them were the keys to the Villa L'Écureuil. The commandant, a fat, stocky, blond German, came in soon. With a few words of bad German and with the aid of his German-French dictionary I made him understand that the Villa L'Écureuil was my house, that I had a sick husband, and that I wanted the keys, as I intended to move in within five days. He clicked his heels, kissed my hand, and said, "*Votre service, Madame.*" He took down the keys to Villa L'Écureuil, gave me his arm, and escorted me down the main street of Barbizon, while the villagers stared and Garnier followed us. I clung to the German's arm, smiled coquettishly at him, and thanked my lucky stars for my Swedish grandmother,

from whom I had probably got the blonde hair and "Nordic" appearance which Germans admired and which probably influenced the commandant. As I was on his saluting arm, the German transferred me from one arm to the other, for he had to give the "Heil Hitler" salute many times before we reached the villa, a short distance away. Every time I caught Garnier's eye, I gave him a wink, for he had been certain that I would never get the keys.

When we arrived in front of the Villa L'Écureuil on the Grande Rue, the German commandant took out the bunch of keys tied with a string and a marker, put the big brass key that opened the courtyard gate into the lock, opened the gate, and gallantly escorted me inside with a flourish, as he said, "*Voilà, Madame,*" and clicked his heels. I shook his hand and said, "*Danke schön, mon commandant.*" He went off pleased with himself, no doubt thinking he had made a great impression of German "correctness" and gallantry. I subsided inside the house with a sigh of relief and felt a great sense of triumph. Garnier said enthusiastically, "*Les américains sont toujours merveilleux,*" and shook his head in admiration.

I asked Garnier to get the house ready for me to move in within five days and then went to call on the mayor again. I informed him that I had the Villa L'Écureuil. He looked at me with respect. "*Bien, Madame, entendu,*" he said, and I started back to Melun to catch the train for Paris. After liberation I had the opportunity of saving M. Pochard from being attacked by an angry mob, who resented his "correct" collaboration with German and Pétain-

iste orders. I was grateful to him, however, for later he gave the Gestapo a report on me which helped to persuade them that I was harmless.

When I told Nadine that we were moving to the country, her loyalty and patience were tried. She had come from a farm near Colmar, in Alsace, where she had worn no shoes but *sabots*, even to dance in, until she was sixteen. She loved the city, though, and had hoped never to live in the country again; she could not believe, either, that I would be able to endure the loneliness of even a suburb of Paris. I tried to give her a picture of the beautiful Forest of Fontainebleau and the lovely village of Barbizon with its quiet charm, but she thought I was touched in the head. Nadine was a tall, dark, slim girl with fine, pale features. When I hired her in November, 1939, I asked her how she, as an Alsatian, felt about the Germans. "My father, *Madame*, always said that there was only one way to cure Germany and that was to kill the women and children," Nadine replied. This seemed a bit stiff to me at the time, but I was relieved that Nadine had a strong anti-German heritage.

We moved out to Barbizon on October 14, 1940. When Nadine saw the Villa L'Écureuil, which had been a farmhouse and was about 300 years old, she was ready to weep. But although the place was old, the American woman who had owned it had put in a good bathroom with an electric bath heater and had also installed central heating, which was connected with the kitchen stove, so that we had the advantages of ancient charm and modern convenience.

My villa was on the Grande Rue, the main street of

Barbizon, and was located almost in the center of the village, with shops across the street and near by. The two little houses on the place were in a courtyard, and there was a studio in the back of the court, which had been used by painters of the Barbizon School and had afterwards been used as a music studio by an American tenant. As you approached L'Écureuil, the first thing you noticed was the wrought-iron squirrel in an iron circle hanging from the eaves, which substituted for a name plate. You entered the courtyard through a big wooden double-doored gate, higher than your head, which you could only look over if you were standing in a cart or in the back of a truck. This proved useful later, for the Germans, who carefully patrolled the neighborhood, could not come on us unawares. The front windows of the two little houses gave on the Grande Rue, and I kept heavy drapes covering these. Friends would knock on the window when they wanted to visit, and we always kept the front gate locked.

The houses were not in bad condition and were comfortable and unpretentious. In the little house on your right as you came in, there were a kitchen, a small cellar, and a stairway leading to one bedroom and bath upstairs. Garnier, the old gardener, told me that a woman had hanged herself on that stairway some years before and asked me whether I was not afraid she would haunt the house; I told him no, but since Nadine was to sleep in that house, I asked him to keep its past dark. In the other little house on the left there were a small salon and another tiny room which could be used as an office and which led into a kitchen. The

kitchen was just wide enough for one person to pass at a time, and it had an enormous cookstove. From the kitchen a door led out into the woodshed and garage. On the side of this second little house was an exterior stairway leading to a second floor, where I had my bedroom and another bathroom. The studio in the center of the courtyard was large and airy and had a big skylight. In the back of the studio was the garden, and along the lane on the right were a pleasant rose hedge and a stone wall bounding my property. Lilac bushes grew along the side of the wooden gate and helped to hide the whole place from intruders. To the right of my place, across the lane, was the Clef-d'Or, a restaurant, where German soldiers frequently ate, and across the street was the Musée de Gannes, which had been a hotel frequented by Millet, Theodore Rousseau, Corot, Diaz, and other painters of the Barbizon School. The town had made it into a museum, and the Germans came every Sunday with their cameras.

When I first went to live in Barbizon, I experienced pangs of loneliness and grief. Everything in the neighborhood reminded me of the idyllic weeks I had spent there in the summer of 1939 with Jacques. Even the villa I had taken was a place we had visited together, and his presence seemed everywhere and yet unreachable. When war parted us, we had been very much in love, and now, living in surroundings that reminded me constantly of him, I felt all the more alone in a chaotic and disordered world. It was particularly painful to be in these familiar surroundings in



the midst of people who were foreign to me after I had enjoyed them with someone so dear to me.

After Nadine and I got the place settled, Jean Fraysse and his wife, Germaine, came to stay with us. Jean was still recuperating from his first operation but managed despite his weakness to keep busy with writing the anticollaborationist leaflets which I distributed in Paris mailboxes. His wife, Germaine, had been at Arcachon with her family during the period when we had all evacuated Paris, and I had sent for her when Jean was to be operated upon. She was a brilliant woman, more than ten years older than her husband, slim, with a lovely figure and the very black hair and eyes so characteristic of the best type of Midi beauty. She had posed for many of Derain's pictures, and before she married Jean had been the wife of Francis Carco, the writer. Cultivated and well educated, she had always been part of the intellectual milieu of Paris. She was opposed to Jean's exerting himself on resistance work while his health was so bad, but he was determined not to spare himself. After seeing Jean on the way to recovery in Barbizon, Germaine returned to live in Paris with her elderly father, but she came out to Barbizon several times a week to visit Jean.

A couple of weeks after we moved to Barbizon Jean became very ill. The local doctor could do nothing for him and said that he must have his major operation as soon as possible. I called up Jean's friend, Pierre Voizard, who was *préfet* of Seine-et-Marne; he arranged to have an ambulance take Jean into Paris the following morning and came

to see us that same day. He told us that he did not expect to remain *préfet* of Seine-et-Marne much longer, for he had resisted the German order to lock up all the Jews in the department and had refused to designate hostages the Germans wanted to shoot in retaliation for acts of sabotage. He had asked the Vichy government for a transfer to North Africa, and was later appointed to a post in Rabat. That night he gave Jean sketches he had made of the German military airfield at Villaroche, about six kilometers from Melun. He told us that it was from this airfield, which the Germans had built up rapidly, that they were sending many of their planes on the fierce raids against England. Voizard and his associates had kept records of the number of German planes leaving Villaroche each night and the number coming back. He gave these figures to Jean as well as figures on the number of German soldiers in the Seine-et-Marne to take into Paris and get to British Intelligence. Voizard assured us that there were plenty of loyal anti-Nazi Frenchmen in the prefecture at Melun, and that they were watching the Germans and reporting to him on their activities. We were cheered by this evidence that there was potentially a strong resistance group in the largest community in our neighborhood and later worked closely with some of these people.

Voizard was disappointed when I told him that we had turned in our five fine shotguns when the mayor of Barbizon had carried out the Nazi decree ordering surrender of all firearms. Three of these shotguns were sporting pieces that had belonged to my father-in-law, and Jean, who loved

to shoot, had brought out two more as well as a revolver. We had debated whether to try to hide them, as some of the peasants were doing with theirs, but to hide a gun you had to seal it in a pipe which had been filled with grease and bury it in the ground, or else the gun would rust and become useless. We did not have the materials for this process, and I thought, too, that the Germans would realize there had been firearms for hunting at my father-in-law's château and might take to searching my place for them unless I gave them up. I did manage to hide Jean's revolver in a can of Mobiloil full of grease, which I put, together with bullets, under the woodpile in the garage. Some farmers in the neighborhood managed to hide their guns, and one of them, who had been a mechanic at Le Bourget airfield until the Nazis had taken over, told me later that he had hidden not only hunting weapons but two machine guns packed in grease. Voizard told us that he and his son had buried their shotguns right in the garden of the Prefecture at Melun. The Germans gave us receipts for our guns, but Voizard assured me that doubtless we would never see them again, as the best weapons had already been sent by the Nazis into Germany.

Voizard sent the ambulance next day, and I rode into Paris with Jean, who took with him the sketches of the German airfield at Villaroche and the other data Voizard had given him. How he passed these on to the British I never knew, and I had sense enough not to ask too many questions about such things—it would have been risking too much if any one person in resistance work knew more than

was necessary and were taken by the Gestapo for questioning. Jean was operated on the same afternoon we arrived back in Paris. His injury had developed into a tumor, and the operation required the removal of a testicle.

### III

GRADUALLY I began to get acquainted with the peasants who inhabited the farms on the famous plain of Barbizon, the most fertile land in the Seine-et-Marne. This plain is completely flat and extends from the edge of the village of Barbizon to Fleury, about five kilometers away. This is the plain which figures in Millet's pictures, *The Angelus* and *The Gleaners*. At some times of day it had a marvelous crystal clarity and changed color continually. Sunshine often lit up this lovely open space, and when it was cold elsewhere one could enjoy this warmth by coming out for a walk on the Barbizon plain. At its edge was a deserted French flying field, with pathetic-looking French fighter planes which the soldiers had wrecked before abandoning the field. They had also managed to burn their gasoline drums and had blown up the ammunition they had stored in the natural caves in the rocks inside the near-by woods. The Germans later dragged all this débris away for salvage. On the day the Germans occupied the neighborhood one of the aviators from this French flying field suddenly appeared in a Nazi uniform, to the horror of the French population. He was an Alsatian fifth columnist.

Though there were now Germans all around the neigh-

borhood, the French inhabitants, like many of the rest of the population of France, with the exception of some who had quickly collaborated, began to ignore them. When German soldiers came into the shops in Barbizon, the proprietors, with a few exceptions, pretended that they had no goods. They would put things aside for us and explain that they did not dare keep them out in the open for fear of German purchases and requisitions. One of the shopkeepers, a man named Ashe, traded with the Germans from the first day of their occupation until the liberation by the Americans, and he was clapped into jail by the French immediately after liberation.

We had one general grocery store and a few smaller shops. The proprietor of the grocery, although he had had a very fine wine cellar before the war, refused to sell as much as a bottle to a German, but whenever anyone else had a fête day, it was possible to get a bottle of good wine from Ganieuse. Mme. Charpentier ran a little *épicerie*. Her husband was a paralytic and had to keep to his room. Her son-in-law worked for the PTT, the telephone company, and went about the surrounding country in his truck. He could get as far away as Brittany with this truck and later proved valuable as a contact man with the resistance forces. Mme. Charpentier herself managed to hide Jewish families. In the early morning hours she had to go to Melun on the bus to buy her produce, for she had no permit to operate a truck. The bus drivers always helped her with her heavy loads, for she was a sweet little woman with a sad smile, and one could feel her sympathy without her ever saying anything

about it. She was very pro-English and pro-American and would tell me every once in a while the news she had heard on the BBC wave length. Nobody in the village knew that I had a radio, and I always accepted the news items the villagers retailed to me as if I had not already heard them.

Nadine was discretion itself, and though the villagers sometimes asked questions about us and were particularly curious about my relationship to Jean Fraysse, Nadine would never let herself be drawn into conversations. She walked down the main street, well made up, in her neat clothes, bowing politely and coldly to passers-by, and people were timid about getting familiar with her.

During those weeks when Jean was recovering from his operation, I spent my time, with the help of Nadine, foraging for food and fuel. Jean came back to Barbizon five days before Christmas. His operation left him not only weak physically but depressed mentally, and he was extremely irritable and suspicious. As soon as he was able to get up and take a little exercise, however, he recovered his spirits and went to work again as hard as ever, writing and making plans in Paris for organizing effective resistance to the Nazis, not only with other writers but with dentists, doctors, book-dealers, and a variety of other individuals. His friend Paul Eluard, the poet, had sent him the booklets of his poems which were printed clandestinely in little pamphlets with bright red or green covers and distributed throughout France by the underground. Eluard's poems proved some of the most inspiring items of resistance literature, as well as the most beautiful, and he and his wife, Nuches, who

had been the model for some of Picasso's paintings, were hunted constantly by the Nazis. They had to sleep at a different house in Paris every night, and though both of them were in very bad health, they kept up their work against the Nazis all during the occupation. Jean himself was soon hard at work again on a pamphlet on the causes of the fall of France.

Christmas, 1940, was a drab occasion. That first winter of occupation was in some ways the worst, and the French did not feel any Christmas spirit. France was in mourning, and terror was evident all around one. The German troops of occupation bought up everything they could lay their hands on to send home for their sentimental Christmas. As toymaking in the Reich had gone to war, the Nazi soldiers bought the French children's toys to send home. They purchased all the furs, perfume, jewelry, and hosiery they could get their hands on. Just before Christmas I sold my fur coat in order to get some money. It was a beaver and brought 65,000 francs. In two years it would have brought 800,000 francs, for then the Germans were buying all the fur they could get to line their winter coats for their hard Russian campaigns.

The weather was fierce during this first occupation winter, and people suffered more than at any other time during the four long years of Nazi domination. The French had not yet acquired the experience necessary for life under enemy occupation, and many of them had not learned to hide their goods from the omnivorous Nazis. The black market was not established, and there was very little to buy.

People had not yet taken to planting their own gardens on every available plot of ground, and the reserves of food had been requisitioned by the Germans.

We usually got up early in our house in Barbizon and Nadine and I foraged for food and fuel while Jean did his writing and worked on his correspondence. I used to go over to Fontainebleau to get his mail, for he had all letters sent from Paris to the *poste restante* there since he thought it dangerous for them to go through the Barbizon post office. The trip was eleven kilometers each way and in winter, walking, took the better part of the day. I took lunch along, and my dog, Ondie, and I would plow through the deep snowdrifts. There were still some sweetshops in Fontainebleau, and one could get beautiful pastry there, but my appetite was almost spoiled when I saw German soldiers gluttonously eating whole, large cakes. The people in Fontainebleau were very anti-Nazi. As I went down the street I would hear the London radio broadcasts going full blast and see a group of people standing round in front of the house in which the radio was turned on, listening openly. At this time the Nazis were either insufficiently organized to cope with this open defiance or else preferred to ignore it for the moment. They tried propaganda persuasion with the people of Fontainebleau, and put up displays in a bookshop there, but week after week the windows of the propaganda shop were smashed in the night and the goods destroyed. The Germans finally began to take hostages for such resistance, and the people of Fontainebleau became more cautious, though no more friendly.





*Villa L'Écureuil, Barbizon*



*The House on the Plain*

The winter evenings were passed reading and playing *belote* and other card games. I had a large library, for Voizard had given me a document certifying that I was the rightful owner of the books in the Château de Fortoisseau. There were about 4000 volumes there which my father-in-law owned, and I wanted to get them over to Barbizon so that we would not only have plenty to read but something to sell. When I went to call on the German commandant who was in residence in the château, he was sitting comfortably in the library, eating a beautiful piece of cheese between thick slices of rye bread with plenty of butter. He was listening to the BBC broadcast.

"I didn't realize you could listen to the English radio," I remarked. He turned off the radio and said, "That was Calais." I asked whether I could go through the château where I had formerly stayed, and he permitted me to look into the main salon and the billiard room. Some of the best pieces of furniture had been sent back to America, and I had some of the rest. The commandant told me proudly that the Germans had spent 100,000 francs just fixing up the heating system and had done over all the bathrooms. It was startling to see on the walls where the Tartière family had had beautiful paintings the repulsive pictures of Hitler and Goering done by bad German painters.

The commandant had been enjoying the books and did not want to part with them, but when I showed my document attesting my ownership of the books, he consented to let me take them. He also gave me French prisoners of war to help the moving man and me pack and move the books.

This was the first time I had seen French prisoners working as slaves for the Germans, and I realized how the Germans had got their renovations done in the heating system and with what forced labor they had done over all the bathrooms. The prisoners who helped us were glad at least not to be working for Germans at the moment. We carted all the books away, leaving the Germans with bare shelves. I put the books in the kitchen, which we did not use, in the smaller of the two houses in Barbizon. Later I sold some of them and sent about 500 books in English to the internment camp at Vittel for English and American women.

Much of our time in Barbizon was spent in the mere process of getting a living. We had managed to get extra food during the winter by hunting wild rabbits, though the Germans had forbidden all hunting or trapping, and imposed prison sentences on those who were caught at it. Their idea, as they said in their public notices posted at the *mairie* and published in the journals, was that to the victor belonged the spoils, and they did not want any of us to get a piece of meat they could use. Nevertheless, we needed to stretch our larder and with the help of Raymond Pouillot, a woodcutter in Barbizon, I bought a ferret to use in hunting rabbits. Pouillot had been a mechanic at Le Bourget airfield, and he used to see me when, in 1938, I went back and forth between Paris and London on airplanes to visit my husband. After the fall of Paris Pouillot left for Bordeaux, where he helped to sabotage the airplanes that had arrived from the United States too late to help save France from the Germans. He and his companions

threw these planes into the harbor, while gendarmes fired on them. Then Pouillot had managed to get back to his home in Barbizon, where he declared himself a farmer and worked for small sums at woodcutting rather than do any work for the Germans as a mechanic at a larger salary.

Pouillot took me over to a farm at Achères, about twenty kilometers to the south, where we each bought ferrets. These little animals were very precious and cost 800 francs apiece. They would go after the rabbits into their burrows and chase them out, fastening their teeth in the rabbit's neck if they caught one. My ferret, Susy, had a little bell around its neck, so that when she dove into the underground passages inhabited by the rabbits, I could tell where she and the rabbit were coming out. You had to put nets around all the possible exits in order to catch the rabbit the ferret was chasing. Pouillot taught me the technique of poaching with a ferret, and I carried Susy under my polo coat in a bag with holes so that she could breathe, when I was on my way to and from poaching. I was able to get a quarter of a liter of milk a day for Susy on the grounds that I was ill. The ferrets lived entirely on bread and milk. I got my nets for catching the rabbits in a shop near the Gare de Lyon in exchange for twenty-five kilos of potatoes. Préfet Voizard had sent us 200 kilos of these precious potatoes, which were some of the only potatoes in our neighborhood that winter and were very useful for bartering purposes as well as for eating.

When spring finally arrived after that first drastic winter of occupation, Garnier, the caretaker, helped me to lay out

my garden, to plant it, and to stock my little improvised farm. I bought two dozen month-old chicks at a white leghorn hatchery at Chartrettes and managed to raise them without losing more than two. It was difficult to get wheat and oats for chickenfeed, as the Germans had forbidden the peasants to sell their grain to anyone but them. Pouillot, however, brought me some grain from his father's farm, and I used to bicycle over to Achères, where I had got my ferret, and bring back a seventy-pound sack of grain. I rode at night without a light on my bicycle, to avoid German patrols. There was a steep incline on the way back from Achères, and it was tense and strenuous work to handle a seventy-pound sack in the basket of a bicycle on a dark night. This trip usually took from about eleven at night until three in the morning and was one of the most exasperating and terrifying of all my chores.

Another difficult problem was to get manure for the ground. French peasants hated to part with their manure, for they had a proverb which went, "The man who sells manure is a wretched farmer; you get back from the soil exactly what you put into it." I got my manure by a lucky chance. One day when I was hunting rabbits in the forest I heard a crackling noise not far away. I stayed without moving in a spot where I was hidden for about three-quarters of an hour for fear the noise near by had been made by a German soldier looking for poachers. Finally, the cold was getting unbearable, and as there was no more noise, I stepped out of the wood. As I did so, a big, red-faced peasant came out, too. It was Louis, whom I had met several times in the village.

He had been hiding from me, too, for fear I was a German soldier. We both smiled when we met out in the open, and Louis said, "*Mais, Madame, vous n'êtes pas enceinte?*" and he pointed to the sack with my ferret which I had under my polo coat. "No, Louis," I answered, "and I think I know what is bulging in your pockets—that right-hand pocket, for instance, is moving!" He had his ferret kept inside this pocket with the aid of a safety pin, and a dead rabbit was in his left-hand pocket.

Louis worked on his family's farm, that of the Gurdé family, now owned by Jean Gurdé, whose mother had been a model for the painter Millet. Louis and I walked back across the Barbizon plain together in the amity of fellow poachers, and he told me the latest news he had heard on the London radio. Louis' exuberance always led him to give the most exaggerated accounts of the latest news, and if one were to believe him the war against the Nazis was practically over. His favorite expression for the plight of the Germans was, "*Ils sont foutus*," and this became a slogan between us.

As we walked home together I told Louis that I, too, had become a farmer. He thought that I was too fragile, but I assured him that I could work like a man and intended to. Louis was surprised at this, for the peasants around Barbizon had only been accustomed to rich Americans in peacetime who rode by on their saddle horses and raised dust. They could not believe that any American woman could work with her hands. The woman who had occupied the Villa L'Écureuil before I did, for example, had kept two

thoroughbred riding horses. I asked Louis how I could get some manure, for I had been unable to buy any, though I had offered neighboring farmers a large price for some. I knew that Louis liked wine, and I told him that I had three magnums of Lanson 1929 champagne, which had been in my father-in-law's wine cellar, and offered him these for two cartloads of manure, provided it was steaming, heavy cowdung. He agreed to deliver the manure back of my garden, for his family had one of their fields under cultivation adjoining my property. Louis brought his two cartloads that week, and I took it away with the help of Garnier and his wheelbarrow. It was such rich, dripping manure that it almost ruined the wheelbarrow.

The following Saturday morning Louis arrived at my house for his compensation. He was slicked up in his corduroy suit and a clean shirt, but Nadine was horrified when I ushered him into the little salon in his boots, which still bore the signs of cowdung. Nadine was shocked again when I called for our bottle of cognac and two glasses and Louis and I toasted each other and proclaimed, "*Vive la France!*" Then I ordered Nadine to bring out the three magnums of champagne which we had been nursing for great occasions. She looked as if she were committing a sacrilege as she transferred the three big, heavy green bottles from her arms to Louis'. I loaned him my old raincoat to cover the three magnums of champagne while he walked down the Grande Rue with them on his way home.

On Sunday people in Barbizon usually celebrated. About six that evening Nadine told me that Louis, very drunk, was



at the front gate, demanding to see me. "Here is the result of your champagne, *Madame!*" Nadine said reproachfully. I went to the outside gate, and there was Louis, beaming, but rather inarticulate. He held in his hand a beautifully arranged nosegay of primroses—lavenders, deep plums, yellows, and whites—with a border of leaves and wrapped round with dry hay instead of the raffia it was impossible to get.

"*Mes hommages, Madame,*" Louis said, and presented his flowers.

"*Merci mille fois, Louis,*" I replied, "*vous êtes un amour!*"

After Louis had left, I came back into the salon, clutching my beautiful nosegay, and said to Nadine: "Wasn't that sweet of him?"

Nadine looked at me and shook her head. "*Madame,*" she said, "I have always said that Americans are crazy, but this time you were right!" For Nadine to admit that I had been right in my dealings with French people was quite a concession. That evening she told Jean Fraysse about the scene. He had begged me to leave all dealings with the peasants to him since he maintained that we Americans did not know how to treat French peasants, but now he said, "I take back what I said. I believe you know how to barter with the French." When he had tried to get manure for me by careful and long-drawn-out manipulations, he had completely failed. It took the equality of man and three magnums of champagne to get what we needed.

Since I was far from expert at raising chickens and other

animals and growing vegetables, I decided to get some books on these subjects. I had grown up on a ranch in Mexico as a child and was toughened by the vigorous outdoor life I had led at that time, but I had no specialized knowledge of farm work and no experience. I picked up some books in Paris and found that the best information was based on research and experiment conducted in the agricultural colleges of the United States. I passed on to the peasants some of the information I gained on the causes of disasters on the farm, but they preferred their old-fashioned methods and had their old-fashioned catastrophes. Yet, on the whole, I learned much more from them than I could ever have got out of my books. I also learned one thing about the French language from them. Once when I was visiting a near-by farmhouse, I remarked that one of my friends in Paris was about to *crever*. The peasant family looked from one to the other and then one of them said to me politely, "Madame, may we offer you one criticism of your very good French; one uses the word *crever* for beasts, never for humans. However, it is all right for Hitler."

At first the peasants seemed to me very cruel because they tied live crows by their feet on poles atop their haystacks as scarecrows for other crows. But all my sentiments for crows disappeared quickly when I had planted my own garden after backbreaking work and found the foul black birds picking out my seed. Then I got out the slingshot one of the peasants had made for me out of a piece of old inner tube and a leather glove and fired away at the parasites.

The first rabbits I raised came from a big farm where I

happened to stop on my way home from one of my walks on the Barbizon plain. The woman who ran this farm had about seventy rabbits, and I bought two small ones for pets. We called one Beatrice and the other Agnes. Beatrice developed considerable personality and used to come into the house and play around under the piano. One day Agnes suddenly disappeared, and we found her one morning surrounded with fur she had pulled out, nursing six baby rabbits. Beatrice, it appeared, was male. After we had those baby rabbits, I made cages for them out of bookcases and the moldings of picture frames, for lumber was impossible to buy. At first I had thought the sunshine in my garden was the healthiest place for our rabbit family, but the first rabbits I put out here didn't last two days before they were stolen, and I moved Agnes' second family into the courtyard where they couldn't be grabbed without our hearing the thief.

Garnier, the caretaker, took a great interest in my garden when he discovered that I was serious about it and willing to work hard. He laid it out for me like a beautiful piece of landscape gardening, taught me where to plant the peas, and where to put the parsley, carrots, and cabbages. Because of the rich manure I had got from Louis we raised some of the best cabbage plants in Barbizon. It was very satisfying as one worked in the garden to hear passers-by in the lane say, as they looked in, "What a beautiful garden!" Since vegetables were practically unobtainable in the shops, one became very concerned and almost tender about each shoot. I could now appreciate something of the peas-

ants' feeling for their land and of the difficulties they were up against year in and year out, whatever the political regime.

As time passed, I learned more about farming and soon realized that I had to get some farm implements as well as advice and aid. All I had found on the place when I got there were a fork, a rake, and a hoe. I needed a wheelbarrow more than anything else, and whatever other implements I could pick up. We saw no way of obtaining these tools until we noticed that the local paper of the Seine-et-Marne, *L'Informateur*, published at Melun, announced auction sales of farm property. Nadine and I went over on our bicycles to Milly, about thirty kilometers from Barbizon, to attend one of these the following Sunday morning.

The auction was on an old farm formerly inhabited by a painter. The only other bidders were peasants from the surrounding country, for it was too far for people from Paris to come without automobiles. The auctioneer, a local farmer with a goatee, was selling big farm wagons, plows, harness, horse collars, wheelbarrows, and such priceless things as coal-wood stoves, stovepipe, barrels, empty wine bottles, and pots and pans. There were also rolls of canvas and some finished paintings and painting equipment which had belonged to the artist tenant. One batch, which it was announced would be sold as a lot, excited me especially. It contained wheelbarrows, pitchforks, shovels, a huge carpenter's bench, plenty of solder, which was rare now too, soldering irons, and large wrenches. When I saw all the canvas in this lot, I asked Nadine what we would do with all that.

She was sharp and realized that we could use it to make excellent rabbit hutches for our rabbits which were now multiplying so rapidly. We finally got the whole lot of miscellaneous valuables for 520 francs.

For 200 francs I also bought a huge seventeenth-century armoire, which bore the stamp of Louis XVI's forge, since it had been repaired in that monarch's reign. It stood as high as a big room and had the width of a wide wall. Later I had it repaired in Fontainebleau, and the craftsman who did the job caressed each piece as he brought it back to my house where he reassembled it. I have been told that this armoire is worth about 30,000 francs.

Robilliard, the Barbizon garageman, had a truck, which he was allowed to drive because he brought the mail and food into Barbizon. He and a couple of his helpers brought home my auction haul for me. In addition to the miscellaneous farm, household, carpentering, plumbing, and painting equipment, I had got several pictures which I stacked in the studio along with much of the other stuff that I did not need at once. I did not look at them again until 1942, when I needed some money, and then found, as we shall see, that I had by luck got hold of some valuable paintings.

At the moment, the most valuable thing of all seemed the two fine Godin stoves, which burned wood as well as coal. These were much more economical of fuel than fireplaces, and with their long stovepipes we were able to heat the whole house whenever we could manage to get enough wood. Some of the canvas and picture frames went into rabbit hutches, but later when I learned that my friend

Picasso needed canvas badly I was able to bring plenty of good seasoned canvas to him in Paris.

While I was busy cultivating my garden and raising animals and vegetables, Jean made frequent trips into Paris for consultations with the writers, publishers, merchants, and students who were gradually developing the nucleus of a resistance movement. He also made two trips across the line of demarcation into unoccupied France. Resistance on the French railroads had developed both more completely and more actively than in any other branch of endeavor, and Jean was able to pass the line of demarcation between occupied France where we were living and unoccupied territory, disguised as a mail sorter. He sorted out the mail until the train got across the line and then returned the cap and costume to the railroad resistance worker who had been assigned to help him get through.

When he came back from these two trips to Toulon and Marseilles, Jean was discouraged. "They don't understand our problems a bit down there," he told me. "They kept asking me when we were going to get started with our resistance, and here we have been doing the best we can under the noses of Germans. They think we are slow, because it's easier to sit in Toulon or Marseilles and figure out what you would do in Paris than it is to be in Paris and get away with what you want to do. And a lot of them down there are turning Pétainiste and pro-German because they hear stories that the Germans are so damned 'correct'!"

We got very sick of that word "correct," which was usu-

ally the excuse for collaborationists. Pétain was also beginning to gain a following among peasants in our Barbizon neighborhood. Some of the peasants also began to accept the Germans because they paid for their requisitioned produce, and they saw no signs of victory against them ever coming. The BBC broadcasts did their best to keep up hope, but it was difficult to carry conviction when there were so few tangible evidences of action. But, although collaboration with the Germans became a habit and in some cases was a faith, there always remained a hard core of resistance. Propaganda circulated widely against the Germans and their Vichyite satellites within occupied territory, and it was easy to get false traveling papers.

The great event of the spring of 1941 was the German invasion of Russia. In France, as elsewhere, this event was quickly recognized as the possible turning point in the war. This was felt particularly in France, however, because of the parallel many people saw with Napoleon's unsuccessful invasion more than a century before, which had been the beginning of his downfall. Some Frenchmen, who by and large still venerated Napoleon, felt confident that if he could not conquer the vast territory of Russia, Hitler certainly would fail to do so. But the initial successes of the Nazis in Russia that summer caused many to lose heart, and the fear, which was ever present, that the Nazis could never be judged by precedents kept us with our fingers crossed as we listened to the discouraging news on the foreign radio and the exultant boasts of the Nazi propagan-

dists. The main effect of the invasion of Russia on the Nazi attitude in France was that whenever they took hostages and summarily shot them, they accused the victims of Bolshevism.

In the first week of September, 1941, Jean came back to Barbizon from one of his frequent trips to Paris.

"I have some very bad news for you," he said. He called Nadine in from the kitchen and they sat on either side of me in the little salon. I felt as if I were about to hear a death sentence.

"Germaine," Jean said, "has heard that Jacques has been killed fighting in Syria."

Nadine burst into tears, for she had been very fond of my husband, and kept repeating, "*Quel ravissant garçon! Quel adorable garçon! C'est pas vrai, c'est pas vrai!*"

I felt too numb to express my anguish, and I took Nadine in my arms to comfort her.

"Don't accept it as true," Jean said, "until we can get something more definite, but I thought it best to tell you about it now, even though it is still a rumor."

Jean gave me a letter Germaine had written with the available details. She wrote that in a hairdressing shop in Paris she had overheard the wife of a well-known French playwright whose husband had recently come from Algiers say that Jacques Tartière had been killed with General Catroux' forces in the battle for Damascus between the Free French and the Vichy troops of General Dentz.

Next morning I went into Paris to see my husband's aunt, Maria Errazurez, to find out what she knew about



this rumor. Maria Errazurez, a Chilean woman, had lived in France for more than twenty-five years and had formerly been married to Jacques Feydeau, my husband's uncle. After the war broke out she had stayed on in France to do war work in the hospital for the poor which she had endowed in Paris for Dr. Thierry de Martel, and after the suicide of Dr. de Martel she continued working day and night for the poor. She was also very successful in hiding Jewish families from the Nazis.

Maria told me that she too had heard of Jacques' death in Syria and was trying to get the news verified via the Chilean Embassy before she reported it to me. There was as yet no formal verification, she said, but she had heard that Jacques' father had had a Mass said in the United States for his son, and she was inclined to believe that the bad news was true. Maria also told me that Jacques' half brother, Philip Keun, had escaped from a German prison camp near Munich with two English officers and had arrived at Maria's apartment in the Avenue du Président Wilson suddenly in the middle of the night.

"Philip wanted news of you," Maria said, "and was anxious to see you, but there was no time. We had to get the three of them out of Paris right away. I have heard since that they arrived safely in England."

Maria advised me to get rid of any letters Jacques had written me while he was in the service of the British and the Free French, and she thought that the knowledge that my husband was dead, which was sure to get back to the Vichy officials and their spies in France, might be dangerous

for me. If they suspected that a man was fighting with the Free French, their bitterness against such a de Gaullist would be transferred to his widow by the Nazis and their collaborators. She suggested that I go to England, but I did not want to do that. All of my interests were in France, and I now had more reason than ever to combat the Nazis where I thought I could do so most effectively. I told Maria that, like her, I regarded France as my adopted country and felt that Jacques would have approved of my continuing in the fight against the Nazis.

During the remainder of 1941 I lived quietly in Barbizon and scarcely ever went into Paris. I raised my plants and animals and stored up food for ourselves and the friends in Paris who would need it. I continued to assist Jean by typing his resistance literature, but there was little I could do that was more active in direct resistance work. Even Jean was more concerned at this time with formulating resistance ideas on paper rather than taking action, for action was still premature. The contacts were slowly being built up within France with the resistance forces in England, who were not yet ready for any armed action in France itself and were merely preparing to store up the arms and ammunition which would be needed when action was to come. It was painful to wait for action, but there was nothing else to do. My own previous experience did not make me fit for any particular tasks in this preliminary work, but through Jean I was known to some active resistance men and was ready for any tasks I could do when the proper time came. Meanwhile, organizations were being set up in Paris for

distributing literature within France and for receiving arms and ammunition from England. Resistance people were in constant touch with England by short-wave radios which had to be moved constantly from apartment to apartment to avoid detection by the Nazis. Sabotage was being planned and carried out by the railroad resistance organization particularly, which was the most highly organized of all the resistance groups. Frenchmen in factories producing for the Nazis were being instructed how to destroy their products and how to put the machinery out of commission. Resistance was still feeling its way cautiously at this time, learning to work in an atmosphere of terror and acceptance. It was progressing slowly and fumblingly from infancy to a growth that was to make it a sturdy fighting front within the Nazi lines.

### III. *Internment*

#### I

I SPENT SUNDAY, December 7, 1941, in Barbizon and had as week-end guests Dr. Robert Lamour and his wife, Annie. Jean Fraysse had gone to pay a visit to his friend, Max Jacob, the writer and painter, at St. Benoît-sur-Loire. After a day spent quietly walking on the plain and relaxing from the week's chores, we turned on the radio to listen to the regular nightly broadcast from London. As the news came over the air that Pearl Harbor had been attacked by the Japanese, one could feel the hope and encouragement in the BBC announcer's voice at this new development which so suddenly brought the United States into this global war.

"This is the end for the Nazis," Robert Lamour said exuberantly.

I wondered what the people I had known in the United States were thinking and how they were reacting to this, their greatest crisis. America seemed far away, and it was impossible within these prison walls of conquered France to get any conception of the feelings and developments there with respect to the events which had brought crises and war to the whole world. It had been almost four years since last I had been home.

We felt greatly exhilarated that night, with the realization that we did not put into words that we now had a great and powerful partner against tough enemies. We were somewhat frustrated, though, because we could not go into the town bars, which were reeking with Nazis.

We listened to the German radio, which went into action at once with the exultant claim that Germany's Axis partner, Japan, had destroyed the whole American fleet. As we were accustomed to German radio lies we did not know how much to believe, but we realized from the cautious BBC announcements that the surprise blow had caused plenty of damage.

The morning after Pearl Harbor Nadine came back from the bakery, worried, because the baker's wife had asked her whether I was not frightened that the Germans would lock me up as soon as the two countries went formally to war. Robert and Annie Lamour also were concerned about that and offered to hide me in their house in Paris for a while. All over Barbizon that day German soldiers were talking

joyfully of the sudden Japanese success. They drank in the cafés to American defeat and were arrogantly sure of the superiority in war of the totalitarian, militarist states. Democracy was something they spat on contemptuously, something whose power they could not possibly understand, and their surprise and bewilderment were all the greater when the full force of this strength they could not believe in was directed against them.

On Tuesday, December 9, I went into Paris with Robert and Annie Lamour to find out what I could about the situation. He was a dentist about thirty-five years old who had been a schoolmate of Jean Frayssé's in the Auvergne. His wife was a beautiful girl from the South of France, with the same fine, white skin and lovely dark hair and eyes as Jean's wife, Germaine. Dr. Lamour had served in the war as a dentist and during the French retreat managed to get false discharge papers and return to Paris, where he worked not only at his dentistry but in resistance, helping to hide young Frenchmen whom the Nazis were corralling and transporting as slave labor for Germany. Jean and he worked together on several resistance projects, and Dr. Lamour, all through the occupation, devoted his savings and his time to helping defeat the hated Nazis in every way he could. He was very pro-American, and it was his dream to tour the United States after the war. He loved to get me to talk about the United States and made me homesick for my own country. He was particularly interested in the Arizona desert, which he had seen in American moving pictures, and he was very enthusiastic about his dental equipment, which

had come from the United States. The only words in English that Dr. Lamour knew were: "I love my mother, but I like my chewing gum better."

When I got to Paris, I called up Revilliod at the Prefecture of Police and asked if he had heard anything about German intentions of interning Americans. He said there had been no talk about that as yet and offered to get word to me in advance if he learned anything about such plans. He did not think I had anything immediate to worry about because of the fact that I was married to a Frenchman. The entire staff of the American Embassy had long since moved to Vichy, and we Americans in Paris had received new passports without the visas which would have made it easier for the Nazis to check up on our past movements.

Jean Fraysse hurried back to Paris from his visit with Max Jacob. He, too, was worried that I would be interned. After nothing happened during the first few days following the declarations of war, the excitement soon died down, and we went about our business as usual. In Paris cafés there were plenty of incidents, however. Young Frenchmen, after a few drinks, took to going up to German soldiers and shouting, "Ha, ha! *Kaput!*" Brawls occurred frequently between the exultant Frenchmen, cheered by the American entry into the war, and the arrogant Germans who were cocksure because of the immediate results of the sneak attack.

I went back to Barbizon a few days later and continued my routine of caring for my crops and animals. The only immediate change in my status after the declaration of war between the United States and Germany was that I now

had to register every Saturday at the *mairie* in Barbizon to indicate that I was still in residence there. I also had to give an inventory of my worldly goods to the German *Kommandantur* in Fontainebleau. All I had to declare was 4000 francs' worth of clothes. Months before Pearl Harbor I had transferred everything else, my furniture, the materials on the farm, and the house lease into the name of my maid, Nadine. Jean and I had both thought it better that the property should be in the name of a French citizen in case anything happened to bring the United States into war, so that the Germans could not confiscate it legally. This transfer had been made shortly after I moved to Barbizon and was registered at the *mairie* there.

I did not feel at ease, however, and when Jean and I paid a visit to his friend, Max Jacob, at St. Benoît-sur-Loire early in the spring of 1942, the trials to which the Nazis subjected their enemies were brought home to me painfully. I had first met Jacob in 1939 when I called on him at St. Benoît with friends. He had lived in the beautiful village for a long time in a grim, dusty old house with the old woman who owned it to take care of him; the place looked as if it hadn't been renovated since the seventeenth century and gave one the creeps. Max Jacob loved the simple old whitestone church of St. Benoît, which was one of the great sights of the neighborhood. He himself was almost as well known a figure in the town. He was short, frail, had stringy gray hair, and was very witty. He wore a big black hat and a black cape and was the picture of one's idea of an old Montmartre artist. Now, because he was a Jew, he was



forced to wear the yellow star of David sewn on the outside of his suit, was forbidden to use the telephone, and was not allowed to eat in the public dining room of the town's little hotel. He had never been mixed up in any resistance work, however, and confined himself to his surrealist poems, to painting his gouaches, and illustrating his manuscripts. When we ate, the three of us were obliged to sit in the kitchen of the hotel in St. Benoît, where the proprietor gave us an excellent dinner with a fine bottle of wine. He did not dare permit his friend, Max Jacob, to eat in the *salle à manger* because he had already been denounced once for having given him a meal in the public dining room.

Jean feared that Max Jacob would be taken by the Nazis and imprisoned. Jacob, though he himself was nervous about that possibility, hoped that because he was a frail old man in his sixties the Nazis would be unlikely to molest him. He was very lonely and terribly hurt at being made so conspicuous among his old friends in St. Benoît because he was a Jew. He wanted to come and visit us in Barbizon, but Jean thought that would be dangerous both for him and for me, because he being a Jew and I an American, it would draw too much Nazi attention to us.

Barbizon was not a particularly safe place for an American. It was infested with collaborationists and was very popular, as well, with the Germans. Two of the Barbizon hotels, the Bas-Bréau and Les Pléiades, were well known throughout France before the war for their cuisine and wine cellars. General Rommel used to stay frequently at these hotels, and General Keitel and other members of the Nazi

High Command visited them from time to time. Jean Luchaire, collaborationist editor of *Nouveau Temps*, and his son-in-law and associate, Guy de Voisin, bought up valuable property in Barbizon, and Sume, who had the concession for printing all the food tickets of France, had a grand villa there, where Pierre Laval used to come often on week ends from Vichy. Suarez, owner of the collaborationist organ *Aujourd'hui*, which contained the most violent pro-Nazi editorials of any paper in France, used to stay with the family that owned the house right in back of mine. A number of rich Belgian industrialists who were actively collaborating with the Germans also lived in our town. Jax, an Austrian who had been a naturalized French citizen for many years, was another collaborator who lived in my neighborhood. He had written to the German commandant as soon as the Nazis entered Barbizon that he would be honored to have some fine German officers live in his house. Later he denounced me to the Germans as a spy, but as he had sent in so many denunciations of so many people in the town, the Germans had come to regard him as a crank and did nothing about his denunciation of me. After liberation the people of Barbizon gave Jax a humiliating ride on a rail through the streets.

Max Jacob gave Jean some of his manuscripts to place in Paris for safekeeping, and he made me a present of a lovely gouache he had made of a Toulouse goose. When we said good-by to him at St. Benoît, the little old man clung to me and wept. That was the last time we ever saw him. The Nazis put him into the prison camp at Drancy for Jews in

the winter of 1943. He contracted pneumonia there, and although he was removed to a clinic in Paris through the influence of friends, it was too late, and he died shortly afterwards.

The Germans began actively to use *provocateurs* in our neighborhood during this spring of 1942. These men and women pretended to be very pro-American and pro-English and tried to draw you into conversation and make you commit yourself. One of these I had a particularly difficult time avoiding. He was a Dutchman with a very beautiful wife who was half Dutch and half German. This man had been a moving-picture producer, and his wife had acted in Dutch and Italian films. He had visited Hollywood in 1937, and affected the polo coats, tweeds, and gay shirts so common there. I encountered him frequently on the street in Barbizon, for in such a small village one ran into almost everyone in town. He claimed that he remembered me from American moving pictures, and I replied that I had only played bit parts from time to time. He knew many of the people I had been acquainted with in Hollywood. Here was another example of the curious German carelessness which left me my freedom and perhaps my life. During my entire stay in Barbizon they never seemed to make the obvious association between Drue Tartière and the actress Drue Leyton, whom they had threatened with death in 1940.

This Dutchman invariably asked me when we met on the street: "Have you heard the BBC news today?" He pretended to be gratified by Allied progress in the war. I

always answered that I had no radio. This man loathed the French and claimed that their decadence had caused them to lose the war, and in conversation with me he usually pretended to loathe the Germans. Once he asked whether I did not need money and offered to take my check on my New York bank in exchange. I assured him that I needed no money, as friends in Paris had loaned me all I required. He tried to find out all he could about my way of life and was particularly interested in learning where my husband was. I told him that Jacques had been there a few weeks before but had left again on business.

"I have not had the pleasure of seeing M. Tartière, but I have seen M. Fraysse," the Dutchman said insinuatingly.

"Oh, yes," I answered. "M. and Mme. Fraysse are frequent visitors. M. Fraysse has been very ill and can do no work and the air of Barbizon is so healthful." That same day I had the satisfaction of walking down the street with Jean's wife and the pleasure of saying to my Dutch inquisitor when we met him, "Have you met Mme. Jean Fraysse?"

"What a fine sight it is," he said gallantly, "to see the perfect type of Nordic American beauty arm in arm with the fine dark beauty of the Midi!" Once his wife told me how lonely she was, begged me to come and see her as there was no one else congenial with her in the village, and asked me to lend her some English and American books. I carefully avoided ever going into their house, and they never got inside mine. One of the men who helped me with my garden told me that he had seen German cars in front of their house at night. This information seemed to be veri-

fied one afternoon in Paris when I ran into the Dutch moving-picture man coming out of the Ritz Hotel arm in arm with General Stülpnagel, Nazi military governor of Paris, the man who loved to take hostages and kill them. I was not anxious to recognize him, nor was he anxious to recognize me. A week or so later, Alf Grand, the proprietor of Barbizon's one American bar, told me that the Dutchman had ordered a special dinner for the coming Sunday night for General Stülpnagel and three other German generals. Later this *provocateur* disappeared into Italy. We never learned what happened to him and only heard that his maid had received a letter from Rome with instructions about closing up his house.

During our walks on the plain Jean and I had frequently passed a little house and farm situated in an isolated place along a dirt road about one and three-quarter kilometers from Barbizon. This farmhouse on the plain was near some woods and was set back a distance from the dirt road that was the only means of approach to it. There was a small park on the property, filled with fine trees, enormous boulders, and little paths. There was also a small orchard with apple, cherry, and pear trees, and the place contained three hectares of land under cultivation with wheat and sugar beets.

The plans of the resistance movement were now maturing, and Jean was seeking at the moment to find a suitable place where cargoes of arms and ammunition could be landed at night by planes coming from England. This house on the plain with the flat field adjoining which had formerly

been a small French landing field seemed to us the perfect solution. It was also sufficiently isolated to receive material dropped by parachutes. I did not know how far Jean's plans for receiving secret consignments of arms had progressed, but he had told me that we had to make all preparations for night visits of this nature. What interested me just as much at the moment about this place on the plain was that it was perfect for raising the fodder I needed so badly for my growing farmyard of animals and would give me more space for housing the family of rabbits, chickens, ducks, and geese. Furthermore, there was a good supply of wood for fuel on the place.

We went to see Mme. Fontaine, a resident of Barbizon who owned the place as well as several other pieces of property in our neighborhood. The property we wanted was inhabited at the time by a shoemaker, whose lease had a year to run, and Mme. Fontaine was delighted with the idea of our buying up his lease, because he kept the place dirty and had let the farm get run down. As the little house had no plumbing or running water, she was curious to know why we wanted it, and Jean explained that it appealed to him for work because of its solitude and privacy; he was doing some writing, he told her, and because he had been ill he needed such a quiet place in which to recuperate. Jean approached the tenant, who asked 3000 francs for his lease; it was an exorbitant price, but we were glad to pay it. He wanted to move anyway, for it was difficult for him to get in and out to the village, as his cobbling work required him to do.

By the end of March, 1942, we had begun to install ourselves in our new property. I moved over furniture and most of my livestock and began to get the land plowed up and prepared for cultivation. From a near-by farmer I got some cartloads of good manure in exchange for four of my husband's fine shirts. Meanwhile, to get some money, I sold books to a bookdealer from Paris who used to spend his week ends in Barbizon. He gave me a particularly good price for a beautiful set of Racine. I also sold two electric refrigerators, one of which I had brought out with me from Paris, while the other had come from my father-in-law's Château de Fortoiseau. There were auction sales in Fontainebleau every Sunday where one could sell things, and I got a good price, for such things as iceboxes were in great demand in France during the occupation. Our own food we kept in a small cave on the property in Barbizon and in summer put some of it down the well.

One of my new fields on the plain I cultivated with alfalfa, which gave me precious fodder for my rabbits. In another I made a large vegetable garden, and one field I reserved for potatoes, which were so valuable not only for our own diet and that of our friends in Paris, but which were also an excellent exchange commodity. I left the rest of the property uncultivated, for its more than six acres were too much for me to handle in addition to my garden in Barbizon.

Jean moved his books and papers out to the little house on the plain and did his resistance writing there. He also used the place as a rendezvous for the resistance men from

Melun and Milly who now began to come to see him at night for conferences on the arrangements that were going on to receive "drops" of arms and other material by parachute. Frenchmen and Englishmen were also beginning to be dropped in the neighborhood at night for sabotage work in France. I was never present at these meetings of Jean's, for the resistance people naturally preferred to have only as many people as were absolutely necessary for their operations know the details of their dangerous and secret work. "Bel Ébat," the name of our new property, means "Fine Frolic," but one of my French friends later called it, more aptly, my *Maison du Crime*.

## II

IN SEPTEMBER, 1942, the Germans suddenly pounced on me. On a hot morning, the twenty-second, I went into my garden at the villa in Barbizon very early in order to get the work of digging up my potatoes done before the sun became unbearable. I was happy because the potatoes had grown so large, one of them being more than a kilo in weight, and I realized that the good manure I had managed to get was doing its work.

Suddenly Ondie came backing up toward me, barking all the way along the garden path. The lilac bushes prevented me from seeing who was approaching, but I knew from the dog's attitude that it must be strangers. A moment later Nadine approached from the house. She was whiter than usual and called to me in a weak, strained voice. Behind her



were two men, one a huge German soldier and the other a smaller Frenchman. Nadine tried to indicate with her eyes, "Look what's behind me!" The German wore around his neck the silver chain with a big medallion affected by Nazi guards, a chain which made one think of a very tough wine steward. The little man in back of him cut a ridiculous figure. He swaggered, and his worn civilian clothes made him look pathetic in company with the blond giant in his neat, dark-green Nazi uniform.

"Madame, they're from the Gestapo in Melun," Nadine said. "It," she added, pointing to the little Frenchman, "says you have to report to the commandant there at once."

I was in my dirty overalls, had dirt between my toes and on my hands; had on a pair of patched sandals, and wore a big, old straw hat. The Nazi guard clicked his heels. The little Frenchman stuck out his hand and said, "*Bonjour, Madame.*" Then he told me that he was the Nazi's interpreter, and that I must come to Melun for an hour's questioning.

"Oh, I'll come later on my bicycle," I said. "I've got to get these potatoes up."

The little man shook his head vigorously and said, "No, we have a car, and we have orders to bring you at once."

My heart sank. I realized that this was no mere formality, such as registering every Saturday at the Barbizon *mairie*, or declaring one's worldly goods at Fontainebleau.

"What's wrong?" I asked.

"I don't think there is anything very wrong, *Madame*," the interpreter said, "but it is urgent."

"Well, at least give me time to have a bath and clean up. I can't go over to Melun looking like this," I replied, pointing at my dirty feet and costume.

"No, no, we haven't time for that," he said. "It's only for an hour's questioning, and you must come at once." I put down my potato fork and started to pick up the potatoes, and put them into the gunny sack. The little man grew impatient and said, "She can do that," pointing at Nadine. The big Nazi now started to get impatient, too, and said to the interpreter, "Nein, nein," and words which I gathered meant that I must come along without further delay.

"Well; come into the house, and have a drink, while I get my papers and handbag," I suggested. To this they consented, and they entered the little salon. I brought out the bottle of cognac and went into the kitchen to get glasses. There I managed to whisper to Nadine to hurry over to the house on the plain and warn Jean Fraysse not to come back to the villa while the two men were still there. When I came back into the salon with glasses, the little man was examining the books on my bookshelves. He found a copy of a French edition of Hitler's *Mein Kampf* and remarked that it was an example of an edition that had been withdrawn from circulation.

"Yes, I know, that's why I value it," I replied. He pulled it out of the bookshelf and noticed that the mice had gnawed away at it.

"You haven't taken very good care of it," he remarked and smiled.

"We've got a lot of rats and mice here," I said. He asked



*Nadine*



*Colette and Drue Tartière at Paris Mondiale Radio Studio*



*Mme. de Gesnes, American-born Barbizon neighbor, with Drue Tartière in studio where two RCAF boys were hidden*

me what I thought of *Mein Kampf*, and I answered: "It's a marvelous work." I was afraid that he might look at some of the other books, for I had some that were forbidden, and I was fearful that he might put his hands on Paul Eluard's clandestine literature, copies of which were tucked behind other books.

"Madame must love books," he said, looking around at the packed shelves.

"Oh, not especially," I said. "I have no time to read. I am too busy on my farm. These came from my father-in-law's place." Then I asked him how he, a Frenchman, happened to be working for the Nazis.

"I am not a Frenchman, I am an Alsatian," he answered stiffly. I had poured them each a large drink of brandy and one for myself, which I certainly needed. The big Nazi soldier sat awkwardly in the little room and did not seem to know how to conduct himself. The Alsatian, however, was trying to be very much a man of the world.

"I'll give you a thousand-franc note, if you can give me any information on why they want me," I said to him. He seemed so sticky that I felt instinctively he would readily accept a bribe.

"I cannot say," he replied, "but if something should go wrong and you could not get back in an hour, I could inform your maid," meaning that he craved the thousand-franc note, anyway. He added that he had heard that there was a man living in the house, indicating that they had asked a few questions in the village before coming to my place. I replied that the man was staying at the moment

with some friends not far off. I poured another cognac for each of them, took one myself, and went for my *carte d'identité* and passport, which they had told me I must bring. Before we left, Nadine returned. She had got inside the house without being observed, and I had been stalling because I did not want the men to notice that she had ever left. As we went out, I in my dirty clothes with the soldier and interpreter on either side of me, Nadine started to weep. I kissed her and said: "For God's sake, Nadine, don't be silly! I am just going over to Melun for an hour's questioning. I'll be right back." I hated more than anything for any of us to shed tears in front of a German.

I got into the gray-green German Army Citroën and remarked: "Well, this is quite an experience, my first automobile ride in months." While the car went down the Grande Rue, the neighbors and shopkeepers were outside their houses, looking at us dolefully. It was very early still, and the bourgeoisie was not yet up. The servants and tradespeople looked stunned. They had seen the German car in front of my door for some time and were frightened that another terrible incident was to occur to a friend. No one waved, and some of my village friends were wringing their hands.

We drove first to Marion Greenough's house about a kilometer and a half north of the village. Miss Greenough was the only other American woman still living in that part of the Seine-et-Marne. She had been a resident of France since before the war of 1914-18 and had come originally from Boston and Rye, New York. I knew her well and had

visited at her house frequently before the war with my husband and his parents. She was a cousin of the late President Lowell, of Harvard, and was a tall, thin woman with a very fine-cut, aristocratic-looking New England face. She was also very deaf. I had seen nothing of her since my residence in Barbizon except when we happened to meet by accident whenever we signed in at the *mairie*. It had seemed best to Jean and to me that I should steer clear of all Americans as much as possible, for we were never certain what attitude some of them had taken, and we did not want to have to answer questions about why I was still living in France.

Marion Greenough was standing on the steps of her house. Another big German with a silver chain around his neck was standing next to her. She was not at all flustered. She had on an elegant black dress and coat and was carrying a small overnight bag.

"Why did you bring a bag along?" I asked, after she got into the car. "I thought we were going for just an hour?"

"My maid insisted," Marion said helplessly.

"What's this all about, do you know?" I asked, as the car drove off. She squeezed my hand and said: "You're so young and beautiful!" This gave me quite a turn, for it sounded as if Marion Greenough were saying something of an epitaph for me and must be expecting the worst. There was something very firm, however, in her handclasp and something that reminded me of Plymouth Rock in her whole attitude, and I felt comforted to be with such a good companion. We talked no more during the rest of the ride of about fourteen kilometers to Melun. I kept wishing I

could leave a trail of pebbles or paper, as I had read of a character doing in a fairy tale, to show my friends which way we were being taken in case I did not show up again.

We finally drove up to an ordinary three-story stone French villa. Here we were led at once by guards to a room on the third floor, which had obviously been a servant's room before the Nazis moved in. The little interpreter told us that the Commandant would see us directly, but we were locked into our room.

When we were alone, we looked around us. There were two black iron cot beds with dirty, worn mattresses, but no sheets or blankets. There was also an old red plush settee whose springs were sticking out, and whose upholstery had seen better days too long ago. I looked under the beds, around the walls, and even rolled up the dirty carpet to see if I could find any traces of dictaphones. We also wondered who might be listening to us on the other side of our room. Then I drew Marion Greenough down on one corner of the dusty settee, sat on the arm, and put my lips very near her so that she could read them, for she was very good at lip reading. I asked her again whether she had any idea why we had been brought here. I was very worried, because I had no way of knowing just how much the Nazis might have found out about me and Jean. On the trip over I had kept wondering whether they would send someone to search my house and the house on the plain. I had buried some of Jean's most incriminating papers, evidence of his activity in resistance, in bottles in the ground, but I remembered that the documents he had taken from Albert Sarraut's



house, when Sarraut had been removed as Minister of the Interior before the Nazi conquest, were still in the studio in my courtyard. I had never looked at them, and I began to wonder now what there might be in them that could be dangerous to both of us.

Marion Greenough shook her head and said, "I don't know what to think." She, too, was beginning to get nervous. "But, Drue, don't forget one thing," she said, "these Germans are stupid pigs. I knew them in the last war." Then she added after a pause, "I have never asked you about yourself, but I have often wondered what happened between you and that wonderful husband of yours." It seemed the right time for confession, and I told her that Jacques had been killed. She burst into tears and hugged me. I told her that the Germans must not find out from us what had happened to Jacques, for that would have deprived me of my excuse for staying in France. I began to worry that this sweet, courageous, elderly woman would somehow get involved in my affairs in case the Germans had found out anything specific about my assistance to Jean, and I warned her that whatever happened to me she must not get mixed up in it. We talked very softly and carefully in this sordid, dirty room, for one felt that the walls might literally have ears. I also urged that no matter what happened to us, we must never give the Boches the satisfaction of seeing us weep, though both of us were having a hard time fighting back tears now, locked up and without any definite knowledge of the reason or of what was going to happen to us.

It was a great comfort despite our danger to have this fine woman to talk with about Jacques, and to talk with someone from my own country again. She realized how difficult it had been during these three months since I had first learned of my husband's death to go about as if nothing had happened. Nadine had been shocked that I did not wear black, but I could not let the Nazis know that Jacques was dead, or at least that I knew he was dead. Marion and I wept quietly together.

During the afternoon the German guard came in and gave us each a cup of vile liquid supposed to be coffee, which was made of roasted grain, with no milk or sugar. That was all we were given to eat or drink. Whenever we wanted to go to the toilet, the guard accompanied us and stood outside the door. Finally, it grew dark, after one of the longest, most uncomfortable days I have ever spent in my life. I called the guard and pointed out to him that we had no bedclothes. He brought us each a dirty old blanket. We were cold, tense, and worried, and I slept little that night. Darkness brought back the sense of panic. I began imagining that all sorts of things had happened in Barbizon if the Nazis had thought to search the place. I worried particularly, of course, about Jean, whose life was at stake. I speculated again and again on what the Nazis might have found out from the material they had taken in their raid on the Paris Mondiale broadcasting station, or what they may have heard from some of their *agents provocateurs* and collaborationist spies in Barbizon. It was a restless, miser-

able night, and to make matters worse we were both desperately hungry.

Next morning the Frenchwoman who did up the rooms for the Germans came in, and I asked her whether she could not get us some food. She was suspicious of us and would answer no questions, but Marion Greenough produced the bread tickets which her maid had thought to include in her overnight bag, and the woman consented to buy us some bread for a tip of fifty francs.

Shortly afterwards an incident occurred which brought about a change in our circumstances. At about ten-thirty I pounded on the door. "Bring someone here who can talk French," I demanded. The guard shrugged his shoulders dumbly, and impulsively I rushed out of the door and down the stairs before he could catch me, with the guard yelling and scrambling after me. He had a gun, but he did not use it. On the floor below I saw a sign reading "Kommandant," and I rushed into that office. A German officer was sitting at a desk with his male secretary. They both jumped up when I came running in, dressed in my dirty overalls, unwashed and uncombed. I ran up to the desk of the Kommandant, who, startled, asked, "Was ist das?"

"I'll tell you what it is," I shouted. "You people say you are bringing me here for an hour, and you've kept us here more than twenty-four hours. Look at me!" I pulled up my overalls and showed him the blood trickling down the sides of my legs; my menstrual period had begun the night before. "If I am going to spend my life in this filthy hole, at

least send to my house and get me some clean clothes, and above all some sanitary napkins."

The Commandant was shocked into consideration. "*Ma pauvre Madame*," he said, "of course I will send for your things." He was a very thin Austrian named Tuehell, with sandy hair and rimless glasses. "What do you want?" he asked. I told him that I wanted my plaid skirt, green jacket, socks, shoes, cosmetics, sanitary napkins, and food. "Moreover, it doesn't seem as if you Gestapo men are ever going to give us anything to eat," I added.

"*Madame*," he said, "the French suggested that you women be put in a French prison, but I would not see a dog live in that French prison. You would be covered with vermin in fifteen minutes. That is why I have put you up in our own quarters." This was the regular Nazi propaganda line in the effort to turn foreigners against the French. He agreed to send one of his men over to Barbizon right away and permitted me to write out a list of things for Nadine to give him.

"How long am I going to be here?" I asked. "I have to know how much I should send for if this hour's questioning, which has already taken twenty-four without questioning, is to last today, tomorrow, and forever!"

"I cannot tell you that," Tuehell answered. "I am waiting for my instructions from Paris."

"Well, do you know what are the charges against me?" I asked.

"No," he answered.

I wrote out the list for Nadine and at the bottom of it

added that she should include my medical certificate from Dr. Porcher. About ten months before, when it seemed as if the Nazis might take up all Americans after Pearl Harbor, Dr. Porcher, one of the best X-ray specialists in France, who had given Jean X-ray treatments, wrote me, at Jean's request, a certificate stating that I had cancer of the womb. "The Germans," Dr. Porcher told me, "are frightened of three things: syphilis, tuberculosis, and cancer. The easiest thing for you to fake in your condition is cancer."

Before I left the Commandant's office I asked whether we could have a newspaper so that we could pass the time. He offered me a German newspaper, and I told him that would do us no good as neither of us read German, but I decided to take it anyway to use for tucking in around our dirty mattresses and pillows. "By the way," I asked, "what about Stalingrad? Has it fallen yet?"

"No, not yet," Tuehell replied, "but it is only a question of time. We are fighting block by block. Why are you so interested in Stalingrad?" he asked.

"There has been so much in your papers about it, I know it must be an important objective," I answered. Whenever possible we enjoyed taunting the Germans about Stalingrad, which was their greatest sore spot and the first proof that they were not the supermen they fancied themselves and some of the rest of the world feared them to be.

Marion Greenough was relieved to see me come back into our room alive. She was glad to hear that I had been successful in getting the German to let me send for clean things and food. We looked over the German newspaper

together. The headlines kept referring to "Stalingrad, Stalingrad, Stalingrad," and there were some German photographs of the rubble and ruin in that heroic city. Marion regretted that I hadn't thought to ask for cards, so I banged on the door and made the guard understand that we wanted some. He brought us a grimy pack.

Later that afternoon my blue zipper bag arrived with clothes and food. I looked first for my medical certificate but could not find it. The guard brought me some water and after I had freshened up and changed my clothes, I found that Nadine had tucked Dr. Porcher's certificate into one of my stockings. She had also put into the bag beside clothes a chunk of good bread, some honey, a little butter, and some paté made out of whatever meat was available. Marion and I had a meal and felt again as if we were alive.

When night came, my fears and doubts returned. I kept wondering why Marion Greenough was locked up with me, for she had never been mixed up in any resistance work. Then, suddenly, the answer began to appear. The door was opened, and the guard brought in an elderly woman with stringy white hair hanging down over her face. She was quite hysterical, but we finally got out of her that she had been the American caretaker of a large golf club which the Germans had occupied. At first, she told us, the Germans had been very "correct." They had moved her to a smaller but comfortable house, had even transported her electric refrigerator and her furniture and permitted her to keep some of the produce of her vegetable garden. "You know," this woman told us, "they are just like our young

men, very nice; when they went off to other stations, they threw kisses. But, suddenly, they came for me in the middle of the night and took me away without even letting me take a toothbrush!" We gave the old woman some of our food, and when the guard opened the adjoining room we put her in there to sleep. It finally began to dawn on me that if the Germans had taken up Marion Greenough and this old party, they must be taking up all Americans automatically, and I slept a little easier that night.

In the morning Commandant Tuhell sent for Marion Greenough and me. He seated us around his desk, was very gracious, and cleared his throat carefully with a few ah-hems. He said that what he had to tell us was very painful indeed. He told us that because the Americans had locked up all German-born women without American naturalization papers, the Germans had no alternative but to take similar measures. He was a married man himself, he said, and he did not believe in making war on women and children, but it had finally come to this, and the Germans' hands had been forced. After he got through his long speech, Marion Greenough said: "What did you say, I can't hear well? Would you please repeat?"

Tuhell was slightly disconcerted and had to repeat his set speech in the loud tones one uses for the benefit of the deaf. When Marion Greenough took in what he was saying, she jumped from her chair and before I could stop her, she was in front of his desk, pounding on it with her fist and saying, "Don't believe a word of it! We'd never do such a thing in America!"

The Commandant was furious. I quickly took over the conversation, saying: "Marion, the Commandant has explained it very nicely, it must be so." "Don't believe a word of it! Don't believe a word of it!" Marion kept repeating. I calmed Marion down and then asked the Commandant up to what age German women in America had been interned. "Up to sixty-five," he replied, "and we have exempted all over sixty-five and all women with children under twelve."

"Well, Miss Greenough here will be sixty-five in two weeks," I said, "so there is a chance for her to be exempted?"

"Yes, that is so," Tuehell replied. In answer to my question he said that the fact that I was married to a Frenchman made no difference, since I still claimed American citizenship. He added that we would be turned over to the German authorities in Paris and would be sent to the internment camp for English and American women at Vittel in the Vosges. Commandant Tuehell said that he was accompanying us to Paris and would, if he had the opportunity, call Miss Greenough's case to the attention of the commandant there. He asked where my husband was, and I said that I did not know.

"I asked because I understand you have been living with another man who is very ill," Tuehell said.

"Yes, that is true," I answered.

"Is that the reason you have stayed on in Barbizon?" he asked.

"Yes, it is an affair of the heart," I answered. I preferred to have him think that than suspect any interest on my part in the war.



"That explains a lot," he remarked.

"Yes, it usually does," I said.

We returned to our room and prepared our few things for our departure. Meanwhile, two young French girls were brought in to join us. They were sisters and had been secretaries in Meaux. They had never been in the United States, spoke nothing but French, and were the daughters of Frenchwomen who had married American soldiers during the last war. The girls had kept their American passports because they had hoped to go to the United States some day and find themselves American husbands; now they found themselves interned by the Germans.

Now that my fear that the Nazis had discovered something about me had disappeared, I was beginning to enjoy myself, and I looked forward to the ride to Paris. However, I was still very much worried about Nadine, who would have to manage the farm and the animals by herself, and I was also concerned about getting back to Barbizon as soon as possible because I knew that Jean's plans for receiving arms, ammunition, saboteurs, and other resistance aids there had matured to the point where we could expect "drops" any night.

We were herded into the bus next day, and some young German soldiers with cameras tried to take our pictures. The old woman from the golf club and the two French secretaries giggled and stared into the cameras. I was in a rage. "Turn your faces away," I shouted at them, "cover yourselves, don't be cheap, and don't let yourselves be photographed by those swine!" Meanwhile the young Germans

were dancing around us and snapping their cameras. One of them, a nasty guard who had eyed me several times during our stay at Melun, kept looking at me and saying to the others, "*Schönes, Mädchen, schönes, Mädchen,*" while his companions laughed oafishly. I had a strong desire to thumb my nose at them but did not quite dare.

In the bus with us, too, were an intelligent-looking Jewish man and two very unhappy Frenchmen, who looked as if they had not slept in many nights. The Nazi guards pushed them into the bus, and the Jewish man sat across the aisle from me, with the two Frenchmen in back of me. While we waited for Commandant Tuehell to finish barking his orders and collecting his dossiers on all of us, the Jew looked at me and said: "*Madame, why are you being taken?*"

"Because I happen to be an American," I answered. "And you?"

"Because I am a Jew," he replied. He explained that he was a dentist who had left Paris without permission to go to his office at Meaux. Someone had reported him, and he had been taken up by the Nazis within two hours of his arrival at Meaux.

One of the Frenchmen behind me tapped me on the shoulder. "It is a disgrace, *Madame,*" he said, "to see this happen to an American in France. I could cry for our humiliation these days."

I asked why they were being arrested, and he told me that he and his companion were being taken to Fresnes, as they had been denounced as Communists the night before. He seemed to be about fifty-five years old. In this period after

the German invasion of Russia anybody who had a grudge against anybody else, or anybody the Nazis wanted to throw into jail, was merely called a Communist, and that was sufficient.

"Then you are called political prisoners?" I asked. "You are liable to be used as hostages?" I felt a cold shudder as I realized what fate awaited them.

"We are liable to be shot regardless," the man answered.

The exhilaration I had felt on leaving the confinement of the dirty room at Melun was gone, and I looked at my companions with mixed emotions. In our bus we had a combination of tragedy, sobriety, and frivolity. Two effeminate-looking young American men got into the bus, and they and the old lady from the golf club and the two French secretaries were soon chatting merrily as if the whole episode were quite a lark.

Tuehell finally got in, and the bus started. Marion Greenough, sitting beside me, exclaimed enthusiastically at the old markers on the French roads and called my attention to historic landmarks. Suddenly, the Jew, looking carefully ahead to see whether Tuehell, who was sitting beside the driver, was watching in the mirror, motioned to me and made signs for me to take some torn bits of paper he had in his hand. I put down my hand, pretending to search for something in the pockets of my coat, took the torn bits of paper, and put them hastily into my pocket. A little while later Tuehell saw the man tearing up more bits of paper, for he had begun systematically to search through his pockets and get rid of whatever he had that could be used against

him. Tuehell screamed at him, "Stop that!" Then he dashed back toward us, grabbed the remaining pieces of paper, and ordered the prisoner to empty all his pockets. Luckily he had already destroyed most of his papers, which I had in bits in my pocket. Tuehell sat down in the back of the bus for the rest of the journey so that he could watch all of us. Nobody talked any more.

We arrived at Drancy after about two hours' ride in a pouring rain. We got no food and began to get hungry, for we had not been fed before we left. At Drancy the bus drew up before some cold, gray, bleak, three-story buildings, with their windows painted an ugly blue for the blackout. Commandant Tuehell called out the name of the Jewish prisoner. The man hesitated before going from the bus into the pouring rain. Tuehell gave him a kick in the behind to hurry him. Tuehell himself was done up in a fine new raincoat, and his boots were shining. He delivered the prisoner and his dossier to the Nazi guard at the Drancy gate, and we went on to our next stop, Fresnes.

At Fresnes the two political prisoners in back of me were called after we went through the big suspension bridge across the moat to the grim prison buildings. I took the hand of the older man and said, "Good luck!" The two men looked at me sadly and each said, "*Mes hommages, Madame.*"

At St. Denis at least 150 English civilians were lined up along an iron picket fence which enclosed the prison's enormous courtyard and numerous barracks. The two young American men got out and were turned over to the guard.

We women were then driven on to the Jardin d'Acclimatation, the botanical gardens of Paris. Commandant Tuehell had permitted me to send word to Nadine telling her that we were being taken there.

A crowd was gathered around the large glass-enclosed structure as our bus drew up to the big door of the Jardin d'Acclimatation. People outside the glass windows along the terrace were trying anxiously to catch glimpses of their loved ones within. Most of the crowd were French, who had relatives, naturalized Americans, in this temporary internment depot. Old men, old women, young men, girls, and children were waiting in the pouring rain, their faces full of grief and worry.

Commandant Tuehell escorted us upstairs. He kept his word and told the Commandant of the depot about Marion Greenough's age, and she was released. She gave me her little sewing kit, shoebox, and the bar of soap from her pre-war stock from Budapest which her maid had packed for her. She thought that her good friend, Sarah Watson, might be there, and before she left for freedom again went upstairs with me to look for her and introduce me.

We walked into the large, improvised dormitory on the second floor, which was now the temporary living quarters for more than 350 interned American women. The first person I ran into was Gladys Delmass, who had worked at the Paris Mondiale radio station after war broke out. She was a very bright girl from Hartford, Connecticut, educated at Vassar and Cambridge, England, where she had become an authority on Elizabethan literature. She was tall and

dark, with a self-assured air, and looked rather like Katharine Hepburn, the actress. Her husband, Jean Delmass, was in charge of controlling publications and paper quotas for the Vichy government, and she expected her French naturalization papers entitling her to release from internment to come through at any moment. With Gladys Delmass was Elsa Blanchard, a sculptress. She, too, had a French husband, Claude Blanchard, who had refused to work for the Germans and was in Paris without a job. I had known Elsa's family in Pasadena, California, many years before.

Sarah Watson came tripping up to see her friend Marion Greenough, who introduced me. She was short and round, with the pink skin of a baby, snow-white hair, and a kindly, illuminating smile. When she started to talk, a soft South Carolina accent added to her charm, and her attractions were enhanced by a lively wit and keen intelligence. She was about fifty. On her dress she wore the red ribbon of the Légion d'Honneur, awarded to her by the French government for her work as director of the Foyer International in the Boulevard St. Michel, an organization which arranged for exchange students between France and other countries in an effort to prevent war. She introduced us to Sylvia Beach, proprietor of the famous bookshop in the Rue de l'Odéon, Shakespeare and Company, and publisher and friend of James Joyce. Sylvia Beach also wore the ribbon of the Légion d'Honneur. Katherine Dudley, friend of my friend "Baron" Molet and of Picasso, was another inmate, and she introduced her friend Noel Murphy, a tall, blonde,

middle-aged woman who looked like a Viking. She had studied lieder in Germany and sung in concerts in Paris. Mrs. Murphy had won the Croix de Guerre in 1940 for her work in evacuating refugees under shellfire.

My attention was drawn to a woman who was sitting on the edge of a cot with an ermine wrap around her feet. She was passing around a five-pound box of chocolates to her friends. I learned that she was Mrs. Charles Bedaux, at whose château the Duke of Windsor married Mrs. Simpson. Mrs. Bedaux said in a very loud voice that she did not expect to be with us long, and that she was waiting for Otto Abetz, Nazi fifth columnist in France before the war and the new Nazi Ambassador to France, to come and get her and her sister released. Next morning a group of French collaborationists, obviously personages high in treachery, arrived with an important German in uniform. They were very respectful to Mrs. Bedaux, helped her pack her things, and out she swept, while the rest of us were enraged at this exhibition of the power of social and political influence.

When I had time to take in the scene in this huge improvised dormitory, I began to notice the pathetic condition of some of the women in internment. Sick women were lying on their cots, moaning. Nervous and anxious wives and mothers were walking up and down restlessly. Everybody was crammed together in this uncomfortable room, where puddles of rain had gathered from leaks in the glass roof. Nazi guards were stationed even in the ladies' room, and they did not seem at all embarrassed at the duty of watching us. Some of the women tried to fake illness, and others

waved their doctor's certificates and demanded to see the medical officer for their release. I decided to save my certificate for a time when I could get the aid of a French doctor.

That evening German women served us soup, meat loaf, and potatoes and German black bread in the dining room downstairs. During supper the roll was called, and the Germans announced that we would be moved next morning.

The dormitory after supper was a scene of chaos. Women began to cry and give way to their depression of spirits. Gradually, as things calmed down, this wailing gave way to a cacophony of snores. The rain kept pouring down, and I woke in the night with wet feet. German soldiers came through in the night with flashlights to count us. The women began to shout when they saw the men and upset the count. One of them yelled, "Don't look now, I've got a man in my bed." When the Germans had counted methodically up to a number, like forty-four, some of the women would shout, "sixty-four," and get them so mixed up that they had to start all over again. The soldiers yelled roughly, "*Sei still!*" but it did no good. The women roared with laughter at them, and one of the soldiers kept shaking his head in despair and saying, "*Oh, là, là, femmes, femmes!*"

Next morning we were awakened early, and German soldiers stood on the balcony near the roof of our dormitory and looked down at us while we were putting on the few clothes some of us had ventured to take off. As they were putting on their girdles and stockings, the women resented this intrusion and shouted remarks at the Nazis. One of



them, who wore a big pink hat and a silver-fox cape and had henna-dyed hair, let down the front of her slip, bared her heavy breasts, and dashed eau de cologne under her armpits. Putting her hands on her hips, she shouted up at the Nazis, "I do hope you are enjoying yourselves!" They retired hastily.

That morning I was called to receive a visit. I found Jean Fraysse and his wife Germaine downstairs. He looked haggard, and Germaine's eyes were red-rimmed from weeping. She handed me a package with cold cream, envelopes and paper, chocolate, and a touching, affectionate note assuring me that Nadine and the animals were all right, and telling me not to worry and to have courage. We got very little chance to talk in the two minutes allowed visitors. The German guard shooed them away quickly to make way for others, but it was fine to catch a glimpse of my friends. Jean had managed to tell me that Dr. Porcher was sending a copy of my medical certificate direct to the German doctor in charge of the internment camp hospital at Vittel, where we were going. As I went back upstairs, I saw one of the women I had been introduced to the day before, her face pressed against the plate-glass window, trying to embrace a German admirer who had come to see her. She was shouting to him through the glass, "Do something! Do something!" She told me later that her Nazi lover had promised to get her out within three days.

The internees in the dormitory bustled about, getting ready for our journey that morning. None of the relatives and friends on the outside was told when we were to leave,

but they kept hanging around, waiting. The Germans cleared them away from the row of buses so that there could be no demonstrations. Each of us received a sausage, a small piece of cheese, and a loaf of black bread for the trip. Among those in the bus I got into were Gladys Delmass, Elsa Blanchard, and Mabel Gardiner, a sculptress from Providence, Rhode Island, who had lived in Montparnasse for many years. She was a middle-aged woman who looked somewhat untidy, but was perfectly serene and had a detached, mystic air. She had bobbed hair which needed trimming and wore a multicolored sweater with a big cape thrown over her shoulders.

As we were being herded into the bus by a German soldier, someone screamed at me from the curb across the road, "My God, Drue, you still in this country!" I looked up and saw Ruth Dubonnet, an American woman married to a Frenchman, whom I had met several times before war broke out. She looked very chic in her Red Cross uniform. "What are you doing here?" she shouted. "Why haven't you called me all this time or let us know what happened to you?" Then, at the top of her lungs, she added, "Is it true what I've heard about Jacques' being killed?" I shuddered and shouted back, "No, I don't think so, that's the first I've heard of it." "Is Noel Murphy with you?" Ruth Dubonnet asked. "No, she's gone on the bus ahead," I answered. "I'm going to get you and her out of this, don't worry," she said.

I had written a little note to Nadine, and when the French driver of our bus passed the window at which I was

sitting, I jiggled it in front of him. He put his head in the window, took my letter to mail, and said, "Madame, I am ashamed to be doing what we have to do, but—" The driver suddenly saw Mabel Gardiner, the Montparnasse sculptress, sitting behind me. "She is a woman from our quarter," he said. "Would you mind calling her to the window? Maybe she will want to send some messages back to her friends." The German guard, at the rear of the bus, was busy checking off names of women getting into the bus. I called Mabel Gardiner, who glided up to the window, put her hand to her chest, and said in an ecstatic voice, "Of course, I have many messages." She hesitated and then said, "Give the *cordonnier mes amitiés*. Tell him I am sad to be leaving and I pray his daughter will get well. And oh, yes, *la crémère*, give her my love and tell her I am sad to be going away and will think of them often." She continued with messages to all the shopkeepers in her quarter. "*Elle est tellement aimée dans notre quartier*," the bus driver said to me, and he was much moved.

As our bus was about to move off, Elsa Blanchard's French husband arrived. His eyes were filled with tears. Elsa bravely threw him kisses and smiled. It was only after the bus was out of sight that she broke down and wept.

In the Paris streets people looked up at our procession of buses and could not seem to figure out who we were, though they realized that we were victims of the Germans. Some of the women in the streets clasped their hands in prayer and wore tragic expressions. The buses were whisked through the streets as fast as possible.

At the railroad marshaling yards at Pantin, the buses drove alongside some parked railroad coaches so that even the workers in the yards did not see us. However, some of Sarah Watson's students from the Foyer International had managed to find out where the Germans were taking their friend and patron. The Germans would not let them approach our platform, but they yelled and screamed their good-bys to Sarah.

The third-class carriages into which we were put had not been cleaned since last some Nazi troops had used them. There were pieces of sausage and cheese and cigarette butts over the floor. They smelled, and the air was close. There was a filthy toilet in our train, but no drinking water. When I complained of our conditions to a Nazi officer in charge, he snapped into his propaganda: "It is the fault of the French, Madame. We ask them for railroad cars to transport American women, and this is what they provide!"

Every time our train went through a station some of the American women on their way to internment tied money to notes and dropped them to people on the platforms to mail. At one place where workers were repairing the road-bed, I put a note to Jean Fraysse, addressed care of "Baron" Molet, down the toilet with ten francs attached to it, telling Jean that I had no worries and that the trip was comfortable.

There were eight in our compartment, including Gladys Delmass and Elsa Blanchard. During the long journey in our cramped, dirty quarters we stood up in turns so that those who were not feeling well could stretch out the length.

of three seats. We arrived at Nancy after nightfall in the midst of an air-raid alarm. The station was completely black. Thousands of dark figures, German troops, were arriving in trains pulling into the tracks on either side of our train. Our Nazi guards locked us into our coaches during the raid but went into the air-raid shelters themselves. German Red Cross women walked up and down the platform, serving coffee to the German soldiers, but when we asked for some, they took pleasure in throwing the warm dregs from empty cups into our faces. By this time I was so thirsty that I went to our guard after the all-clear had sounded and he had come out of the shelter and begged for water. He permitted me to take a sip from his canteen.

We arrived in Vittel early next morning. An ambulance was drawn up at the station to transport three women who were so ill they could not walk, but the rest of us tramped from the station to the Grand Hotel. As we marched along, weary and dispirited, the Englishwomen who had been interned since 1940 hung out of the windows of the hotels where they were quartered and gave us a wild reception. They cheered, shouted greetings to us, and sang. These de luxe hotels of Vittel had taken on something of the air of tenements, with wash on the lines everywhere, and women hanging out of the windows and screaming. German soldiers kept snapping pictures of our procession to send home. Some of the new internees stuck their tongues out at them, and the pictures of these scenes later appeared in German magazines which we saw. The Englishwomen told us later that they thought us rather cold in our reaction to

their enthusiastic reception, but we were too stunned, weary, and uncomfortable to respond to their cheers.

Our group was led into the Casino next to the Grand Hotel. The approaches to all the hotels and other buildings where internees were confined were lined with barbed wire. Some German soldiers in the Casino examined our papers and took our money. Each of us was allowed to keep 600 francs, and the rest of the money we had on us was deposited by the Germans in one of their banks in Vittel, from which the internees could draw 600 francs a month each. I found it a simple matter to hide 3000 francs and my medical certificate in my shoe while we were waiting on a bench for examination of our luggage.

Six of us Americans who had known each other in Paris or had friends in common there thought it would be a good idea if we could get assigned to a room together. I saw a blond Nazi officer, who seemed to have pleasant enough manners, and after finding out from one of the English sisters that they liked him, I approached the table where he was sitting with another officer, who barked like a caricature of a German. The Commandant of the camp, Landhauser, a short, stocky German with a pleasant face, came in and joined them. I went up to their table and presented our case for a room together. Landhauser and the blond officer were very polite, walked back to our group with me, and I introduced them formally to Elsa Blanchard, Katherine Dudley, Princess Murat, Gladys Delmass, and Noel Murphy. The Commandant and his associate, Damasky, agreed at once to let us share a room, and they passed our

luggage quickly. They merely took away paper, envelopes, flashlights, which were forbidden for fear of signaling to planes, and reading matter, which was returned after examination by censors. The officer who was examining my bag seemed human enough, so I said to him: "There's nothing in there that would interest you. Why bother?"

He looked up at me and smiled. "Gee, why the hell didn't you go home?" he asked.

"How do you happen to speak English like that?" I asked.

"I worked in a sugar factory in Yonkers until the war started," he said. "Do you know Yonkers?"

"Yes," I answered. "Did you like it?"

"Of course," he said. "I'm going right back there after this war is over."

Senegalese porters carried our bags to our rooms. We shared a large room with six cots, and we were delighted to get into this comparative privacy and out of the confusion of shouting women and Germans yelling back at them. Two Englishwomen were waiting in our room with a tea tray laid out for us. One of them was Mary Walker, to whom I had telephoned when I almost got arrested at Suresnes soon after my return to Paris. She greeted me enthusiastically but feebly and told me that she had been sent first to the Santé Prison in Paris, where the Germans had kept her in solitary confinement for four months and had not permitted her any change of clothes. She looked terribly broken in health and was obviously still suffering from the nervous shock resulting from her experience.

With the help of the Englishwomen who had been at Vittel so long before we arrived, we soon settled down to the routine of life in an internment camp. For many of us the fact that we were all in the same boat, and that the Englishwomen had endured so much more than we had, made us less lonely and depressed, but there were some women who felt sorry only for themselves from the first of their internment and remained so continuously.

The Grand Hotel at Vittel was a large, five-story resort hotel, which had been elegant in peacetime. Hermes, Elizabeth Arden, and others had operated shops off the terrace. Now these shops were operated by the tradespeople of the camp. One Englishman was very clever at making espadrilles with the aid of the high-grade string from our Red Cross boxes, and he also could repair shoes with canvas. An English tailor made over clothes beautifully. A Frenchwoman from the town sold buttons, thread, and notions. There was a vegetable canteen. You were all right if you had money. We Americans got none from our government, but the English received a small sum every month. It was possible, however, to smuggle in money through visitors.

Our big room had a balcony overlooking the Vittel *parc* and a valley of the Vosges. It was fine, rolling country, but fog often settled in the valleys and made the weather miserable. There were tennis courts, a bowling green, and even a maypole, and some of the women had brought along tennis rackets or had managed to get some sent to them. A library had been accumulated, and classes in languages and bridge had been organized to help pass the time. We were



furnished the collaborationist French newspapers, and Nazi propaganda films were shown. One of these was particularly designed to make the English hate the Americans. Most of the films were travelogues and nature films. No newsreels were shown.

Within the barbed-wire enclosure marking off the buildings and park the internees were allowed to walk about freely. We were not supposed to talk to the inhabitants of the town, but we often managed to ask workers on the road just outside our enclosure what news they had heard on the BBC broadcasts. Curfew was at sundown, when all the internees had to be inside the hotel, but we were permitted to stay up as late as we pleased, reading and talking in our rooms behind the blackout curtains. Vittel was completely blacked out. Solitaire became a favorite way of passing these long evening hours, when the sun went down early, in October, November, and December.

Our main occupation, however, was devising new dishes out of some ordinary ingredients. The Englishwomen helped us a lot in this, for they had learned by experience how to make very good pies and cakes out of the available crackers, margarine, and lemon curd. Our meals were prepared by us and consumed in our rooms, and we also kept our own rooms clean, but the days passed slowly in spite of our housekeeping and amusements, and with the approach of cold weather and the passage of time we began to get on each other's nerves. Some of us would want to go to bed when others wanted to read. Sometimes one of the inmates of our room forgot to clean the bathtub. There were

quarrels about the way to fix the food. The Germans gave us some watery mashed potatoes, watery cabbage or kale, and, once or twice a week, a small piece of boiled beef or other meat. Our main sustenance came from the excellent Red Cross packages we received every week or ten days. These contained tea, coffee, butter, marmalade, canned meats, puddings, and cigarettes. It was like receiving a fine Christmas present to get one of these boxes with things which had been unobtainable in occupied France, and it was wonderful to smoke English cigarettes again. Some of us were luckier than the Englishwomen, whose homes were far away. Once a week Nadine sent me a dozen eggs, a few potatoes, some apples and other fruits. We bartered constantly, and it was common to see notices on the bulletin board offering to trade two bars of soap for three packages of cigarettes and similar advertisements. The camp authorities furnished one pair of clean sheets a month, and the rest of our bedding, our warm clothing, and extra food had to come from home. Nevertheless, though we had our material difficulties, our most distressing problems arose because a few of the women in the camp were pro-German, anti-Semitic, anti-English, and anti-American.

### III

I FOUND OUT from Mary Walker that there were four French doctors and a Scotch doctor, prisoners of war, in attendance at the camp hospital in Vittel. Dr. von Weber, a Nazi officer, was responsible for the hospital and made an

inspection tour about once a week. After I had been in Vittel about ten days, I went to the hospital to present my medical certificate and start the process of getting out of the camp and back to Barbizon. I was particularly anxious to get back at this time because I was aware that preparations for resistance work were well under way and, for all I knew, the process of receiving arms and ammunition from England had already begun at Barbizon. In any case, every day spent in Vittel was a day wasted in the effort to work against the Nazis.

First I had to pass the hospital receptionist, Mother Mary de la Providence, an English nun, about forty years old, who had served for many years in France before the war and had been interned at the time of the Pétain armistice. Mary Walker told me that the gynecologist was a Dr. Jean Lévy, and I asked to see him. Mother Mary showed me his office down the hall, where I waited in line with the other women and wondered how I was going to manage to see him alone. When it came my turn, by a lucky chance, Dr. Lévy sent the sister with one of the patients to a specialist's office, and he saw me alone. I told him that I was a niece by marriage of Dr. Thierry de Martel, and that my medical certificate was signed by two doctors in Paris whom he must know, Dr. Porcher and Dr. Varangot. Dr. Lévy nodded and said that he was a classmate of Dr. Varangot. He looked at my certificate and asked, "Are you suffering as badly as this says, or are you asking me to help you with a false certificate?" He looked up at me with a sorrowful, but sympathetic expression. One of the sisters had told me

of Dr. Lévy's troubles, and they all praised his fine character. His sixty-nine-year-old father was locked up in Drancy, the Nazi prison camp for Jews, because he was found one day in the *métro* without his star of David sewn on his overcoat, though he wore one on his jacket. Dr. Lévy's wife and daughter were in hiding, and his mother and sister were living in Paris in difficult circumstances.

I confessed to Dr. Lévy that my certificate was a false one, and added, "But, Dr. Lévy, I must get out of this camp. I am doing work with some friends in Barbizon, and we are just getting to the point where we can be useful against the Nazis. I don't want to try an escape, because both of us would then be hunted, and all our work would be put in danger. The best thing is for me to get out on medical grounds."

"It is practically impossible for me to do anything for you," Dr. Lévy said, shaking his head doubtfully. "You must realize the position they have me in, with my old father locked up, and the rest of my family potential hostages." He went on to tell me that the French doctors who had run the hospital before he and Dr. Pigache were brought there had been sent into forced labor in Germany because an Englishwoman who had been released on medical grounds boasted in her hotel in Paris that she had got out when there was nothing in the world the matter with her.

I told Dr. Lévy that I understood his position thoroughly, but that I intended to get out of that camp. I explained that my medical certificates had been sent direct to Dr. von Weber, and asked if he could risk saying, when Dr. von

Weber sent for me, that he knew my case and could testify that I was as ill as my certificate said I was. He asked me whether I was suffering from hemorrhages, and when I told him I was, he thought that a good thing for my plan. He then examined me in the presence of his assistant, Dr. Monteith, in order to see how far he dared go in corroborating my false medical certificate. While examining me, he kept shaking his head and saying, "Very bad, very bad," for the benefit of the witness present. Then he dismissed me with a fine, sympathetic smile and assured me that he would follow up the case.

About a week later I was told by one of the sisters to go for my appointment with the dentist, Dr. Rolland, at ten-fifteen. I knew that I had no such appointment but realized that this was a rendezvous. Dr. Rolland was not a prisoner of war but lived in the town with his wife and had been drafted by the Germans for dentistry in the Vittel camp. His aunt, Mme. Roger, lived in Barbizon. One day after I had been taken to Vittel, Mme. Roger met Nadine at the laundry, took her aside, and walked down the street with her. "I know you are a discreet girl," she said, "and I know your Mme. Tartière, who has been kind to all of us. I have my nephew at Vittel, and if you write a letter addressed to him, I will send it along. I am sure he will deliver it to her, but be careful what you say, for their mail is sometimes opened."

Dr. Rolland was alone in his office when I got there. He said, "I have had a letter from my aunt, Mme. Roger, in Barbizon, and I have confidence in your discretion. Jean

Frayse has been to see my aunt, and I think this thing can be worked if we are careful. I am calling Dr. Lévy over here, as he has asked to see you again, and in my office we are not surrounded by sisters." Dr. Rolland put a bib on me while I sat in the dentist's chair. Then he went to get Dr. Lévy, and when the two men returned, he pretended to examine my teeth in case anyone should come into the room.

"Von Weber has asked for you to be called in on his next visit," Dr. Lévy informed me. "If he will take my word for it, without examining you, there is a chance we may be able to do something. He's a brute, a regular Prussian, but he knows absolutely nothing about a woman's insides and he has asked for my diagnosis. I haven't dared commit myself as yet, and I won't be able to until I find out whether he is going to examine you with a speculum."

A few days later I was sent for to come to von Weber's office. Mother Mary de la Providence whispered to me before she ushered me in, "His bark scares everyone to death, he's a real devil, but you mustn't be frightened of him." As soon as he entered the hospital building, von Weber began shouting. He was gray-haired and very tall, had a severe, finely-cut face, and was typically Prussian. He shook hands with me and motioned to me to sit down beside his desk. Behind him were standing Dr. Lévy and Dr. Pigache. I could see that Dr. Lévy was in absolute terror of von Weber, and the atmosphere in the room was horrible. Von Weber looked at the medical certificates in front of him on his desk and said gruffly to Dr. Lévy, "Have you

examined her?" Dr. Lévy said that he had and that my case history was attached to the papers. Von Weber looked it over and said to me, "*Très mal, très mal*, you must have an operation."

I declined an operation, pointed out that my doctor in Paris, Dr. Porcher, was one of the best X-ray experts and said that I wanted to get back there to take X-ray treatments from him.

"Oh, all that is very old-fashioned," von Weber said. "We don't treat these things that way any longer. You should have an operation."

I knew that they had to have my consent to an operation, and I said, "I cannot have an operation."

Von Weber looked contemptuously at Dr. Lévy and said, "Is it because you don't want *him* to do it?"

"No," I answered. "I just don't want an operation. I am still a young woman, I like my body, and I don't want to have scars on it for the rest of my life."

Von Weber looked at me slyly, smiled slightly, and then said, "Well, if that is how you feel about it, I don't know that we can do anything for you. We haven't the equipment here for X-ray treatments." I thought I had lost my case. "Is she having bad hemorrhages?" von Weber asked Dr. Lévy. He said that I was. "You are going to get very weak," von Weber warned me. Then he told me to watch my condition carefully and to come back to see him the following week. I thanked him and left the office. He treated me politely, but he treated Dr. Lévy, because he was a Jew, as if he were some repulsive reptile. It was hard to keep my

temper in his presence, but I did, for I would lose everything if I lost that.

That same afternoon I was told to go to Dr. Rolland's office again. This time there was a happy surprise awaiting me. "Jean Fraysse will be here this afternoon," Dr. Rolland told me. "He will arrive after visiting hours, so you won't be able to see him today, but you will see him tomorrow morning. This evening my wife will walk with him by the hospital window between five-thirty and six. Mother Mary de-la Providence is going to watch for them. Go over to the hospital, and Mother Mary will get you to the window at the right moment."

I was at the hospital promptly, and a few minutes later Jean came down the street with Mme. Rolland. Mother Mary put me at the window in the empty dining hall of the hospital. I kept back so that the German guard would not see me. Jean threw a kiss, and I waved feebly. Soon the German soldier on guard began to whistle at them and looked up to try to find out where they were sending greetings, but Mother Mary and I drew back, and he did not see us.

My companions at the hotel were envious and excited next morning when the loudspeaker announced a visitor for Mme. Tartière. It was necessary to get special permits to visit Vittel, and these and transportation were hard to arrange. A German guard came for me and took me across the street from the Grand Hotel to the Censor's office at the end of the park. I had prepared a short note which I hoped to pass to Jean in case I had to talk with him in the



presence of others, and I had put in my bag two packages of English cigarettes, a bar of chocolate, and a bar of soap. With three other inmates I waited my turn, and finally two German guards led me into the Censor's room, a small cubicle with a desk and a couple of chairs. Damasky, the blond German who had been polite to us when we entered the camp and permitted us to have a room together, was sitting at the Censor's desk.

When Jean saw me, he broke down and wept. "How badly you look!" he said. "You look as if you were dying."

"What is the matter?" Damasky asked. "I have not heard that you have been ill." I introduced Jean to him, and he was very friendly toward us.

"What have you done with this woman?" Jean asked. Damasky replied that I had not been reported ill, and he knew nothing about it. I told him that I had been very ill and had seen Dr. von Weber the day before. Damasky looked at Jean, and noticing how upset he was, asked me: "Is this your sweetheart?"

"Yes," I replied. Damasky seemed sincerely sympathetic, and it was only with an effort that we remembered he was a Gestapo man, not to be trusted. It was safer that he should think of us as lovers rather than conspirators. Damasky remarked that Jean, too, looked very ill, and I explained that he had had a severe operation, and that my being taken away had been a great shock to him.

"I am going to do something unusual," Damasky said. "I will put you on your honor and leave you alone together for twenty minutes. But you must pass no notes to each

other." I showed him the cigarettes, chocolate, and soap I had brought for Jean, and he told Jean to put them in his pocket, though it was against the rules for him to take them. I did not give Jean the note, for I wanted to take no chances. In it I had told him that I didn't think there was a chance of my being sent back to Paris for X-ray treatments, that von Weber wanted me to have an operation instead, and that I had refused.

After Damasky left the room, Jean and I moved toward the window. I begged him to stop weeping, so that the Germans would not have the satisfaction of seeing our grief. He blamed himself for getting me into this situation by permitting me to remain in France. He told me that Nadine was bearing up beautifully, that Germaine was staying with her a great deal, and that everything was under control in Barbizon. All the good people there, he said, were asking for me. He said that he had had a note from his friend Georges Hilaire from Vichy, who had written to Hutterman, head of the Gestapo in Paris, giving a very good report on me, telling him that I was not well, that I lived quietly and never had been involved in politics in any way. Hilaire had added that anything Hutterman could do for me would be much appreciated by the Minister of the Interior. Jean himself had gone to see Serge Lifar and asked him to appeal to Goering in my behalf. Lifar had promised to do so. Another friend of Jean's had appealed to Count Joseph von Ledebur, a Gestapo official in Paris, in my behalf.

Before we started talking we had looked under the desk and around the bare walls for signs of dictaphones but could

discover nothing. Jean whispered to me that if my medical certificates did not work, and nothing could be done through the influence of Hilaire and his other friends, he was arranging for my escape, and that I would be informed of the details through Dr. Rolland, the Vittel dentist. Jean added that he intended to make a trip outside of occupied territory before long, and he told me that if I needed anything I should communicate with his wife, Germaine, at my place in Barbizon. He kept saying, "Hospital bed, you must get yourself into a hospital bed." He asked me who my roommates were, and when I told him, he warned me against a couple of them who had friends among the Germans in Paris. Jean said that he had to leave Vittel that night, as he had come there at great risk without any papers and a suspicious man had started a conversation with him at the hotel in Vittel the night before.

Damasky came back into the room, and the first thing he asked Jean was whether he had a pass. Jean looked sheepish and admitted that he did not have one.

"That could be very serious for you," Damasky remarked. "I can understand what one will do when one is in love," he added, "but if you are planning to come here again, don't come for eighteen days. I am going on leave, and if you should run into someone else who did not understand the situation between you and Mme. Tartière, you might get into a lot of trouble."

We thanked Damasky profusely. I asked him where he had learned to speak such perfect English, and he told me that he had lived in Canada for fifteen years, had been at

McGill University, and had given stereopticon lectures on Germany throughout Canada. "I love Canada, and America," he said. The priest who used to visit us at the Grand Hotel had told me that Damasky was a fine fellow. He had also told me that Damasky had asked to be transferred to service on the Russian front. I asked him if this was true, and he said that it was, explaining that he did not want his countrymen to consider him a "softie" who had spent the war guarding a women's internment camp. He added that they were going to have a hard winter on the Russian front.

"Yes, Stalingrad must be a pretty tough proposition," I remarked. Jean looked at me, startled and annoyed at my lack of tact in mentioning a matter about which the Germans were so sensitive. But Damasky did not seem to mind.

"Yes, those Russians," he said. "Do you like Russians?"

"I don't know Russians at all," I replied. "The only Russian I know is Serge Lifar."

"He is far from typical," Damasky said with a smile.

Jean asked if he might send me some books, and Damasky said that he could send anything except books written by Jews and anti-German propaganda. It was his job to read the books for censorship and he would see that I got them. He told Jean that he would have to go now and that we could not leave together. I went out first, escorted by the two guards. As I passed through the barbed-wire gate into our enclosure, I waved to Jean until he was out of sight. Then I started slowly back to my room. I wanted to get off

by myself until I could regain my poise before having to face my companions again. I leaned against a tree in the park and wept. An elderly Englishwoman came by, put her arm around me, and said, "Darlin', it's awfully nice to have someone who loves you enough to come to see you. You shouldn't be sad about it. He's a very handsome man."

Next morning I heard again from Dr. Rolland and went to his office. He gave me a letter from Jean and told me that Jean was in bad physical condition. Dr. Rolland had put the dentist's bib around my neck and pretended to examine my teeth. He told me that Jean had got in touch with Maria Errazurez, my husband's aunt, and with Philip Keun, my husband's half brother, and that if I could not get out on the grounds of ill health, they intended to smuggle me out in a nun's costume, which Mother Mary de la Providence would supply. He told me that he was sure Mother Mary was trustworthy, but that some of the other sisters were indiscreet. Jean, he said, was going to try to get to North Africa, and he gave me 3000 francs Jean had given him for me. Dr. Rolland had talked with Dr. Lévy again about me that morning, and he told me that Dr. Lévy was prepared to run the risk of helping me to get out on medical grounds. Then he went to fetch Dr. Lévy.

"Have a crise this afternoon in your room," Dr. Lévy said, "and I will have you brought over to the hospital, but be very careful. I am told that some of the women in your room are Nazi sympathizers." Dr. Lévy had tears in his eyes. He took both my hands in his and said, "I hope you realize

the risks we are running." I told him how much I appreciated that fact, and that I, too, had a lot at stake and could be depended upon to be careful.

Back in my room, I told my roommates that I was feeling terrible. They knew that I had been having hemorrhages and had seen the medical certificate stating that I had a cancer. They were very considerate of me and would not let me do any of the housework that day. Around two o'clock that afternoon I pretended to faint and succeeded in simulating loss of consciousness. They called for the doctor, packed my bag, and with sisters to support me on either side, I went to the hospital.

Dr. Lévy came to see me and prescribed medicine to stop my hemorrhages. I also had with me some medicine which Dr. Porcher had given me to stimulate hemorrhages and which had been sent to me at Melun by Nadine along with my clothes and medical certificate. Later Dr. Lévy slipped in when the sister was not in my room and told me to get rid of the medicine he had prescribed by throwing it down the toilet adjoining my room while the sisters were not looking. He said I should take Dr. Porcher's medicine instead at stated intervals. He also told me that when von Weber came on his rounds he would try to arrange it so that he did not examine me unless my blood was flowing badly. If it was, he told me to say "Yes" when he came on his occasional morning rounds, and "No," if it had stopped. He hoped to find some means of avoiding von Weber's personal examination unless my condition was really bad.

I felt immense relief at being alone in a room, but some

guilt at the solicitude and worry of my friends, particularly Sarah Watson and Sylvia Beach, who lived in the hospital building and came down to see me frequently. Visiting hours were from two to four in the afternoon, and I was deluged with visits and sympathy. Dr. Rolland came in several times a week and sometimes brought letters from Jean Fraysse, which were written as if addressed to Dr. Rolland himself. He also gave me the news he had heard on the BBC. My former roommates brought me delicacies from their Red Cross packages and books from the library. I remember that the Nazis banned Thomas Mann's *The Magic Mountain* from the camp library but permitted Flaubert's letters, which I read with great interest while I was in the hospital, for they described vividly conditions during the Franco-Prussian War of 1870 which were very like those France was enduring today. Jean Fraysse sent me a three-volume edition of Tolstoy's *War and Peace* in French. When Damasky, the Gestapo censor, saw this, he sent me a note saying that he had always wanted to read that book, and suggesting that if I were not in a hurry for it, he would like to read it first and send it to me volume by volume. I sent word by the priest who visited me every night that he should take his time about *War and Peace*.

I remained in bed all the time and managed easily to get rid of the medicine that was supposed to stop my hemorrhages. After I had been in the hospital about a week, I heard a great deal of shouting one day, and the sister who was taking care of me came rushing in and said, "I must hide your ash tray and cigarettes, it's that Prussian brute,

and he's due on this floor today." I was quite frightened, for this was my first real performance with von Weber, the scene in his office being merely a matter of questions and answers. Fortunately, my period was in progress, and I was having bad hemorrhages due to the medicine I had taken surreptitiously to make them worse than usual.

I heard von Weber's heavy boot treads in the corridor. He went into the room next to mine, where a very old sister was critically ill. I heard the conversation between them through the wall and felt better when I heard him calling her *ma mère* and telling her that he was going to send her back to her convent. She had a cancer of the stomach and said to von Weber, "Yes, I am being sent back to die." "I am afraid that is true," von Weber said.

Von Weber came into my room. I had no make-up on, my hair was hanging down, and I looked as wan and pathetic as possible. Dr. Lévy and Dr. Pigache, who accompanied von Weber on his rounds, stood at the foot of my bed, while the German sat down beside me and took my hand.

"I hear, *ma fille*," he said, "that things do not go well."

I left my hand in his and said, "No, not at all well, *Herr Doktor*."

"I still say you should have an operation," he insisted.

"No, if I can get back to Paris and get X-ray treatments from my own doctor, I will be better off," I said and managed to squeeze out a few tears.

Von Weber turned to the sister and said, "Bring me rubber gloves and some vaseline." I was thoroughly scared now



and loathed the idea of his touching me. I had a *crise* and put on a scene like a virgin. Dr. Lévy came around to the side of my bed, took my hand, and said, "Don't be frightened, the *Herr Doktor* is merely going to examine you, and it will be over very quickly." Von Weber put on a white hospital gown and went into the adjoining bathroom to wash his hands. Dr. Lévy kept making signs to me to have courage. He stood next to von Weber when he came back with rubber gloves on his big hands. When the German found that he needed more room, he did not ask Dr. Lévy to move further away, but kicked him aside irritably. Then he shoved his hand inside me and was quite startled at the result. "She is having such a hemorrhage, it's impossible to tell anything," he said angrily. "She can't lie here this way," he added to Lévy. "I think we should send her to Nancy for X-ray treatment." I had let out a howl when he examined me, and pinched his hand hard. Now I was weeping. "I won't go to Nancy," I said between sobs. "They are bombing there every night."

Von Weber was sympathetic. He prescribed hot douches with medicaments and the same medicine Dr. Lévy had already given me to stop hemorrhages. He patted my forehead, told me to stop crying, and left. He obviously thought I was in very bad shape. He inquired on his next visit whether the medicine was helping me, and Dr. Lévy spoke up quickly, saying, "Not much." Meanwhile, my friends in internment who also thought I was dying were getting very much concerned, and it was difficult to keep up this deception with them, too. I myself was beginning to get the

feeling that I might die, and I began to get morbid, lying in bed day after day and night after night, wondering when this weakening farce would end. Whenever I could manage it without being detected, I got up and walked around the bed in order to regain some of my strength. One evening I got so hysterical that I had to smash something, and I chose the dozen precious eggs Nadine had sent me that morning. I threw them viciously out of the window and enjoyed the squish they made on the path below. Dr. Rolland came to visit me and kept urging me to have patience, and I told him that I did not know whether I could go on with this ordeal another day. Dr. Lévy was worried, not only about me, but about his family, of whom he had had no news. He took to walking up and down the corridors of the hospital most of the night, the sisters told me, and they were afraid he would lose his sanity. It depressed me, too, to realize the great risk he was taking for me, and I began to feel that we would never succeed in fooling von Weber.

One night Dr. Lévy slipped in to see me and told me that he was getting worried because he was afraid I could not go on losing blood much longer. I tried to reassure him, telling him that I felt fine and had been up against harder jobs than this one. Both he and Dr. Rolland were also afraid that I might say something in front of my many visitors that would give the game away. It was now cold, and as there was heat in my room and none in the Grand Hotel that was an added attraction for my visitors, who sat with me and chattered as long as they could. Noel Murphy was in my room one day when Dr. Lévy came to see me. He went out as soon as

he saw her, and Mrs. Murphy turned to me and said, "I think it's a disgrace to have you, an American woman, taken care of by that Jew! I loathe the man!" I did not dare show how I felt about this outburst.

Some of my visitors were less disturbing. One evening my door opened quietly and a lovely sister dressed in cream white entered. She had a serene face and a refined manner. She introduced herself as Mother Chad and asked if she might sit with me for a while. She told me that she had worked in India for a great many years and had run a convent there. She was English by birth and while she was on her way back to England to see her father, who was dying, and to get treatment for her eyes, she had arrived in Paris just as the Germans were entering the city and had been taken prisoner. She had been of great comfort to Dr. Lévy, and she told me what a wonderful man he was and how lucky I was to be in such good hands. She also told me that if I felt the need of her company at any time of the day or night, I must not hesitate to send for her and asked if she might drop in again. Mother Chad spread around her an aura of peace, and she seemed to have absorbed the serenity engendered by Eastern religious influences.

On November 8, 1942, Dr. Rolland came running into my room and told me the biggest news we had heard to date: "The Americans have landed in North Africa!" The news spread rapidly through the whole camp. Sisters came rushing in to tell me about it. Sarah Watson and Sylvia Beach came running into my room. Dr. Lévy went up and down the corridor, singing. Everybody kept saying that it

would not be long now before the war was over. Two of the women in the Grand Hotel had a different attitude, however. They were furious when they came to see me, and one of them said, "God damn these Americans. Why can't they keep their noses out of this? They'll get what's coming to them." She had forgotten her American heritage in her admiration for a particular Nazi and for Germany in general.

Later on that historic day von Weber came in on his weekly rounds. He took my hand and asked me how I felt. "I am getting no better," I said, "and I still have the same difficulty."

"I am sending word to Berlin," he said, "that I think it advisable you should be sent back to Paris. If, after checking with Paris, they find your record is all right, the order for your release may come through in three or four weeks." He looked down at me and stroked my forehead. "Aren't you happy?" he asked.

"Not especially," I answered, and looked up at him coyly. "Why?"

"Well, I am sorry for you, because now you are *kaput*," I answered. It was a risky thing to say, but feeling reckless and defiant and knowing that von Weber liked me, I impulsively took the chance. Dr. Lévy and Dr. Pigache, who were standing at the foot of the bed, looked as if they would collapse. The red-haired English sister giggled. Von Weber looked at me in surprise and answered, "That's where you make a big mistake. This war has just reached its normal plane, and it can go on now for five years."

"Oh, *Doktor*, don't say that," I said. "The war is so horrible, and we are all so tired of it."

"I know war," von Weber said, "and I know what I am talking about."

After he had left, the red-haired Sister Agnes came back into my room and said, "Five years, the old fool!" Dr. Lévy also came in and scolded me for what I had done.

"But I have to tease him a little. He likes me," I said.

"He is a very dangerous man," Dr. Lévy said. He told me that von Weber had sent word to Berlin already in my behalf and that Lévy's own diagnosis in my case had accompanied the papers to Berlin.

Next time von Weber was due to arrive, Dr. Lévy came to my room to tell me that the German might want to examine me again that day and asked if I was having hemorrhages. As I was not having them at the time, Dr. Lévy brought me some bloodsoaked rags to put in my bed. When von Weber arrived and asked if I was still having hemorrhages, I turned the bedclothes aside so that he could see the bandages. He commented on how thin I was getting, which was true, and asked if I was eating enough. I told him I had no appetite, which he said was the result of my weakness. He told me that I must have patience, as it took time for the papers to go to Berlin, Paris, and back again.

The news of the American landings in North Africa and the prospect of success of my own attempt to get back to Barbizon were enough to drive away my morbidity and discouragement. Dr. Lévy, Dr. Rolland, the sisters, and my visitors brought me reports of the progress of the North

African campaign, but most of the news they got was exaggerated, and the optimism in France was so great that at least once a week the rumor spread in Vittel that the Germans had asked for peace. On the other hand, one of the American women in Vittel had received a letter from her German friend in Italy telling her that the Americans did not have a chance of victory, and that the Germans had practically won the war. Another had received a card from American friends of one of the Gestapo officials in Paris, saying that he had left Paris and told them, a little prematurely, that his forwarding address would be Alexandria.

One night about nine o'clock flocks of RAF bombers flew across the full moon, low over Vittel. We heard the friendly drone of these planes and saw them clearly. At once the internment camp became a scene of wild joy and disorder. The women switched on lights all over the place. We rushed to windows and waved exuberantly to the planes and cheered. In the hotel buildings the women internees were screaming, shouting, and singing *Tipperary*, *God Save the King*, and other songs. "Are we downhearted?" they would shout from one building, and the answer came from a neighboring hotel, "A thousand times no!" Then another building would take up the cry, and the answer would be returned vigorously. The German guards were frantic but helpless. They whistled, fired their guns into the air, and tried to quell the riot of enthusiasm. One of the RAF planes flickered its red and green wing lights to us, and we went wild all over again.

I jumped out of bed, forgetting all caution in my happi-

ness, put a heavy coat over my dressing gown, and rushed down the hospital corridor. In the foyer Mother Mary de la Providence in her nun's robes was doing a Highland fling with Dr. Monteith. Some of the women in the Grand Hotel began hurling their pots, pans, and tin cans down on the heads of the frenzied German guards, and others from other buildings followed suit. Some also hurled water down at the Nazis. Mother Chad, in her white robes, with her hands outstretched to the sky, stood watching wave after wave of beautiful big bombers passing in front of the moon. Dr. Pigache was standing on the balcony from which I was watching the scenes. He and another doctor were hugging each other in their delight. Suddenly Pigache realized that I had no business to be there and told me to go back to bed. As I dashed in from the balcony Dr. Monteith swung me around in a dance. Dr. Lévy was running up and down the hospital corridor, applauding. When he saw me, however, he got alarmed. "Get back into that bed, or you'll ruin everything," he said.

Meanwhile, the Germans had pulled the main electric light switch. After about an hour of this mad rejoicing, things calmed down. But at about one in the morning the bombers flew over again on their way home from their mission, and the whole scene started up again. The internees leaned out of the windows and sang lustily. We were sadder now, though, for we were wondering how many of the planes were missing. This was the first flock of planes the English internees had seen over Vittel since their internment there soon after the outbreak of war.

Next day the Germans penalized us by giving us no lights, cutting food rations, and abolishing visiting for a time. We learned that the RAF had bombed Stuttgart in force that night.

Our English companions had suffered many hardships since their internment in France. Many of the women had first been sent to Besançon. Mother Mary de la Providence told me that there had been many deaths there during that first cold war winter and that most of the internees had contracted dysentery. The Germans had provided only planks stretched across a trench for toilets. To reach these the nuns and others had to go down four flights of stairs. Mother Mary told me that she had fallen into this trench one night, making the only robes she had filthy. Knowing of these conditions, most of us Americans realized how lucky we were in the comparative luxury of Vittel, but antagonisms cropped up between some of the Englishwomen and some of the Americans, and the English were particularly incensed when one American woman was taken away from Vittel in a beautiful private car, allegedly sent for her by Franco. She was presented with beautiful roses for the journey and gave a big luncheon party in a Vittel hotel for high-ranking Nazi personnel of the internment camp. The Englishwomen hissed her and were only prevented from stoning the car as it drove out of the barbed-wire enclosure by the presence of German guards.

On the afternoon of December 10 von Weber came directly to my room on his arrival at the hospital and told me that I was to be sent to Paris the following morning.



He wished me good-by and hoped that I would be sensible and submit to an operation, warning me again that X-ray treatment was only a palliative. I thanked him for his advice and his personal interest in my case. He instructed the sister to make arrangements to have me taken to the train the following morning in an ambulance and ordered that a sister should accompany me in the train to Paris. "I hope that you will tell the Americans some day that your stay in this camp was not too painful," he said. "It is an unfortunate thing," he added, "that we are at war with your country." He was earnest and moved, but my only thought was relief that at last our efforts had been successful.

The news spread through the hospital and the Grand Hotel that I was leaving in the morning. Dr. Rolland came in to see me, kissed me on both cheeks, and said, "*Ça y est!*" He also warned me to be very careful and offered to write to Jean Fraysse and tell him that I was being released. Mother Mary de la Providence came in, kissed me, and said, "Our prayers have been answered." Dr. Lévy begged me to make no slips and asked me to call on his mother in Paris. I assured him that I knew how much I owed to him and how grateful I would be for the rest of my life. His eyes filled with tears, and he went out. I did not see him again until after the liberation of Paris, when he was finally released from Vittel by the French forces which took that town.

At visiting time that day I learned that Sarah Watson and Noel Murphy were also being released and going back on the same train with me. A Hungarian clergyman had inter-

ceded for Sarah Watson with the Gestapo, and the fact that she had taken care of both German and Japanese students at her Foyer International before the war helped her. Noel Murphy was released through the influence of friends of hers in Paris.

In the morning the doctors, the sisters, and our many friends who had to remain in the camp were lined up in front of the ambulance to say good-by, and I was sorry to leave them with the impression that I was really dying. The train was jammed with German soldiers. I was put in a compartment with Sarah Watson, Noel Murphy, and another American woman who had received a case of champagne the day before her release and had decided to consume quantities of it before her departure. At the station she threw her arms around Laxey, the Gestapo official in charge, and asked him whether he remembered certain night clubs on the Hudson River, for it was he who had worked before the war in a sugar factory in Yonkers. During our ride she kept telling us, "The Germans aren't such bad people after all, are they?" Another American woman in our compartment had been a stunt performer in Hollywood many years before. Her fingers were black from a disease she had contracted, and she was being released temporarily so that she could appear in a lawsuit she had brought after she was knocked down by a truck. A German guard who spoke English was in charge of us, and the sister who accompanied me would not let me lift a finger for myself.

We arrived at the station in Nancy in the pitch-dark and again, just as when we were on our way to Vittel, an air-raid

alarm sounded. We had to change trains here, and we waited for our Paris connection in the station's Red Cross canteen. Noel Murphy and the Hollywood stunt woman went to Walters, the famous restaurant in Nancy, for a good dinner. The drunken woman sank into a stupor in a corner of the canteen. Sarah Watson had prepared lunch boxes for herself and for me, and the French Red Cross women, who were preparing cookies and chocolate for young Frenchmen on their way through Nancy to forced labor in Germany, gave us some bouillon. The rain was coming down heavily.

Later that night we got into another train jammed with German troops. The ride to Paris in our dirty, hot, cramped quarters was long and tiring. The exhilaration of release was beginning to wear off, and I kept worrying about what had happened to my friends during the long three months of my internment at Vittel and what problems I would share with the rest of the occupied population as soon as I got back into the routine of living surrounded by Nazis. The stunt woman had brought back a bottle of wine and kept passing it around, but none of us felt like taking it from her black fingers, and even the German guard passed it up. He snored all night, with his mouth half open, and his head fell over on my shoulder. The large white hood of the sister, who was sitting on the other side of me, kept scratching my face.

We arrived at the Gare de l'Est in the cold dawn of a December day. Red Cross personnel were there to meet me with a station wagon. Some of Sarah Watson's students, among them a little Japanese, arrived with a big bunch of

flowers. Two very chic-looking friends of the drunken woman were there to meet her. The two Red Cross men and my sister helped me through the station, where I almost fainted twice from weakness. I gave them the address of Germaine Fraysse's apartment in Paris at 11 Quai d'Anjou. Germaine was surprised to see me arrive at such an early hour, accompanied by my retinue of attendants, and she was shocked at my appearance. As soon as I could get rid of my attendants with the help of tips, Germaine took me in her arms and began to cry. I told her to open my Red Cross box, where I had some real coffee. "We'll have a cup of good coffee and then we can figure out where we go from here."

## IV. *Clandestine Guests*

### I

THE MOST important news Germaine had to tell me was that her husband, Jean, had disappeared. He had been ill again, and in November went to stay with his mother and brother in Cannes. About two weeks after the invasion of North Africa he left Cannes for Marseilles, telling his brother that he was going to North Africa and to expect no news for some time. He carried no papers of identification for fear of reprisals against his wife and family should the Germans catch him. Since his departure from Cannes that November day in 1942 none of his relatives or friends has had any word of Jean Fraysse. We know that a ship was sunk in the Mediterranean on its way to North Africa about

the time of Jean's departure. It has been presumed ever since that he was one of the resistance men traveling on that ship.

Germaine told me that the Germans were making more and more arrests in Paris and its environs. She thought it more dangerous than ever for me to take any part in resistance work with Jean's friends in Paris or in Melun, and I told her that I intended to go back to Barbizon and live there quietly.

On my first day back in Paris I went to see my friend Dr. Porcher, whose certificate had been so valuable in helping me to get out of Vittel. He was amazed that von Weber had not ordered me to be examined by a German specialist on my return to Paris and was afraid that the Germans might still insist on that. Dr. Porcher had been busy falsifying X-ray plates for young Frenchmen to prove that they were tubercular, so that the Germans would not take them into forced labor in Germany. Since last I had seen him four months ago many of his friends had been taken prisoner and some had been shot. He warned me to be especially careful now of people who might denounce me to the Nazis. One friend of his had been denounced by a servant who had been with him for more than twelve years. Dr. Porcher was a tall, thin man in his forties. He was particularly worried at the moment about his own son, who had reached the age at which the Germans were taking young Frenchmen for forced labor; he had succeeded in getting him into a sanitarium by means of a false medical certificate. He and the other courageous resistance doctors

throughout France were daily performing some of the most vital work for the continued existence of the movement. In addition, he did medical work free of charge for poor French families whose relatives had already been taken into Germany. Dr. Porcher advised me to come to a clinic in Paris at least twice a week for a while for treatment in case the Germans investigated my case further.

Next morning I went to report at 84 Avenue Foch, the Gestapo office in Paris. Hutterman, a polite Austrian, was head of this office. He offered me a chair and remarked that I did not look well. I told him that I did not feel well, which was true, for the blood I had lost in Vittel and the strain of my effort there had had their effect. Hutterman expressed his regrets and hoped that I would now be well taken care of, and I assured him that I had an excellent doctor for my difficulty. He sent for my dossier. It was a thick folder, and I remarked that I did not realize that I was important enough to require so many documents.

"Can't I see them?" I asked.

"I'm afraid not," he answered. "There is one thing in your dossier that I would like to talk to you about; it almost kept you from being released from Vittel. In 1936 your father-in-law had some Englishmen as house guests at the Château de Fortoisseau in the Seine-et-Marne. Among them was a man who is now prominent in the English government."

"That can have nothing to do with me," I said. "I did not marry into the Tartière family until 1938."

Hutterman also pointed out that my father-in-law was

married to a Jewess whose family was prominent in the United States, but he added that he had received very good recommendations of me, one from Georges Hilaire, from the Vichy Ministry of the Interior, and the other from Pochard, Mayor of Barbizon. I said that I would like to see that and reached over and picked up the paper he had before him on his desk. He looked slightly annoyed, but said, "All right, go ahead and look at it," after I had the paper in my hands. M. Pochard had written that I was much admired in the village, that I went about my own business, was not very strong, in fact was in poor health, and that he had never heard me express any political views nor had he ever learned that I had engaged in political discussions.

I asked Hutterman for permission to come in and out of Barbizon regularly in order to get X-ray treatments from Dr. Porcher in Paris, and he gave me a *laisser-passer* without date of expiration which gave me complete freedom to visit Paris at any time. Hutterman told me that the only formality required of me was to sign in at the Barbizon *mairie* every Saturday as usual before my internment, and told me that I must realize that I had been released from Vittel on my honor and that this fact showed the Germans had confidence in me. I said that I understood that and appreciated their consideration. I was nervous during this interview, my first with a Gestapo man, but it went off much more easily than I had anticipated. It seemed to me peculiar at the time that while they knew the antecedents of my husband's step-mother and the guests his father had had in his château, they seemed to know nothing about my association with



Jean Fraysse and did not reveal any knowledge of my work as Drue Leyton for Paris Mondiale. It was one of many evidences we had during the course of the occupation that the Gestapo was far from infallible and was, in fact, frequently downright careless.

Huttermann suggested that I let him know should I get into any trouble with the French State Police, who were under the administration of Pierre Laval but were also under the supervision of the Germans. He assured me that with my certificate of release from Vittel and the pass he had given me I would have no trouble with the German authorities.

From the Gestapo office I went to the Clinique Alma in the Place de l'Alma, where I registered with the nurse and made appointments to come into Paris every week for treatments. Since I was very anemic I had to have blood transfusions from time to time during the following year.

That night I took the six o'clock train for Melun. It was pouring rain, and I arrived about an hour later, cold and tired. The station was pitch-black. I walked over to the little office from which the bus to Barbizon usually left and discovered that there was no bus that night. Ahead of me in the doorway of the bus station was Mme. Albert, the woman who ran the Barbizon hardware store, who had been doing a big business with the Germans during the occupation. A Belgian, who had worked for the Gestapo in Barbizon, was also waiting for the bus.

"Don't you think we might find a taxi in Melun?" I

suggested to Mme. Albert. "Do you know a number to call?"

When she heard my accent, Mme. Albert turned and recognized me. She spat and said, "*Salé anglaise!* How is it you are at liberty?"

"You dirty English have caused us enough misery," the Belgian added. "Do you think we would take you with us in a taxi?"

This was the first time in my entire stay in Barbizon that anyone had turned on me with such hatred. I was frightened, shocked, and angry, but I did not dare to say a word. I walked across to the railroad station and telephoned to Robilliard, the garageman who lived near my house in Barbizon. When I heard his friendly voice and his offer to come for me at once in his truck, though it was against the law, I began to weep, and I was happy to realize that there were still some helpful friends in Barbizon.

About twenty minutes later Robilliard arrived. The two collaborators came running out of a near-by café when they saw his truck, and they begged him to take them to Barbizon.

"I'll pay you 3000 francs not to take those people," I said to Robilliard.

"Don't make a scene," he said. "Those are two dangerous people." He put me in the front seat next to him and permitted Mme. Albert and the Belgian to climb into the back of the truck. There was a heavy windshield separating us from them, and while we drove slowly in the pouring rain and black night, Robilliard told me who they were, and

their record. He warned me to be extra careful and said that Barbizon had become more dangerous than ever and was seething with Gestapo people, collaborationists, and their stooges.

When at last I stood in front of the large wooden gate leading to my house, I felt great emotion at being able to come back home again. I rang the bell, and Nadine came to the gate. She let out a shriek, opened the gate, and Ondie came running out and jumped all over me while Nadine and I embraced as we wept together. When we got settled in the little salon alone, Nadine told me the news of the farm. After she had heard that I was being released she had ceased to sell animals, which she had been compelled to do for support and because there were too many for her to take care of. She, too, warned me at once that Barbizon had become a very dangerous place to live in.

It was a cold, sunny morning next day. Nadine was down to her last *stère* of wood, and she told me that it was getting more difficult than ever to find any. I walked over to the house of the *garde forestier*, who was pro-English and had always been very friendly to me. I told him that we were in a desperate state for wood. He was glad to see me back and told me that he would see that we got some. In his kitchen his two little boys were playing on the floor with some dolls. One of the children was about five and the other three. They were viciously cracking the heads of their dolls together with resounding thwacks.

"What in the world are you doing to your dolls?" I asked. "You are going to smash them!"

"They're sales boches," the older child said to me in a whisper, with his hand over the corner of his mouth.

I walked along the streets of Barbizon very slowly with the aid of a cane. As I wanted to give the impression of feeble health, I did not dare to use my bicycle. On my way home from the *garde forestier's* I stopped in to see Marion Greenough. She broke down and wept when she saw me, and we had a long talk. She, too, told me to be very careful and that people were being denounced right and left to the Nazis.

From the moment I got off the train in Melun I received a series of impressions making me realize that pro- and anti-Nazi feeling was much more pronounced than when I had left Barbizon in September, almost three months before. Collaborationists now felt less secure after the Germans and Italians failed to dislodge our troops from North Africa, and after the Germans failed to take Stalingrad. With the increase in their fear they became all the more vindictive against Frenchmen and foreigners who were pro-English and pro-American. We who felt that the war was now turning in our favor had to be all the more careful not to lose our liberty before our liberation.

That afternoon Nadine, Ondie, and I walked over to the little house on the plain. It looked isolated and cold in the bleak December air, and a great loneliness came over me. Jean's writing materials were still lying on a table, and his other belongings reminded me of how much I had lost as a result of his disappearance.

During the following week I went into Paris for my first

treatment at the clinic, and I took the opportunity to call on Dr. Lévy's mother at her apartment in the Denfert-Rochereau quarter. When I told the old lady that I was a friend of her son's who had just come from Vittel, she grabbed me and kissed me on both cheeks. "How is my *petit Jean*?" she asked. She told me that her husband was still imprisoned in Drancy and that Dr. Lévy's wife and child were well hidden. She had had two lovely letters from Mother Chad, and I told her what a fine comfort and influence this nun had been for her son. I did not dare tell her all that her son had done for me in Vittel, however, for fear she might talk to her friends and get her son in trouble. She had hoped that he might get the leave French prisoners of war were entitled to, but each time the matter came up, the Nazis in Vittel managed to prevent it for Jean Lévy because he was a Jew. "My Jean was such a good soldier," the old lady said, "and such a good Frenchman. We left Alsace because we were so French." I told her how much good her son was doing for the women in the hospital at Vittel, and this seemed some small comfort to her for whom the Nazis had created so much misery. She refused any help from me, maintaining that her friends were providing her with all she needed.

Christmas was approaching, but during this hard year of 1942 the holiday was once more a sad occasion. The German women in the Nazi women's corps uniform whom one saw in the *métro* were carrying gaily wrapped bundles and miniature Christmas trees. Every German soldier and his girl seemed to have packages tied with gay ribbons. The French

sarled at them and shivered in their shabby, worn clothing.

During the remainder of the winter I remained in isolation and spent much time at the little house on the plain. Dominique, one of the resistance men from Melun who had come often for conferences with Jean Fraysse, visited me. I told him of the atmosphere in Barbizon and suggested that if I were to avoid being sent back into internment or even put in prison, I had better take no part at all in their work for a time and receive no visits from them, which might be dangerous for all of us. It was hard to keep quiet, and it would have assuaged my loneliness to plunge into active work, especially as I had learned from Robert Lamour that resistance people were now much better organized and were preparing to strike as soon as the word came from London. Instead I threw myself into as much work on my land as I could do without arousing the suspicion of my neighbors that I was not so ill as I was supposed to be. The physical work was healthy and fatiguing, and sleep came more easily as a result of it. There was plenty of work to do, and I spent much time cutting up wood and snaring rabbits. Wild rabbits were multiplying rapidly in the woods and pheasants were flying about freely because of the German penalties against hunting. My own tame rabbits had also multiplied, and the problem of getting enough fodder for them and the other animals was becoming increasingly difficult.

When the time came to plow the fields on the plain, one of my neighbors, Paillé, gave me manure and the services of his son to plow in return for a suit and a new pair of

shoes which had belonged to my husband. Young Paillé dumped the load of cowdung in the morning and told me to spread it around the fields by afternoon, when he would return to plow. It was a backbreaking job, and I slaved at it continuously without stopping to eat until he returned because I knew that the peasants had very little time to spare and were working overtime to get in their spring planting. I carried the piles of manure in a wheelbarrow and spread it around with a big pitchfork. The farm boy arrived exactly on time, looked over my work, and said with a superior air, "*Madame*, it is not well done." I had blisters on my hands, my back ached fiercely, and my sabots were clogged with the thick manure. "Well, it isn't exactly my profession," I answered. Young Paillé laughed, excused himself, and said, "*Madame*, it is wonderfully done." While he plowed, crows and small birds called *pies* followed the furrows. He took a slingshot from his pocket and at the end of each furrow popped them off. Thereafter I always carried my own slingshot, made of an oak branch, an old piece of rubber from a worn inner tube, and the piece of an old leather glove, in the hip pocket of my overalls, and it was satisfying that spring and summer to sit in the fields and pick off birds that preyed on my corn and peas. I even managed to kill an occasional rabbit with it. I planted acres of potatoes, sugar beets, tomatoes, peas, leeks, sweet corn, and carrots. I also planted some tobacco, for cigarettes were getting scarcer than ever and women were not permitted tobacco cards. A gardener in Barbizon sold me the tobacco plants and told me to plant sunflower and sweet

corn around them in order to hide the swift-growing tobacco leaves from passers-by. They grew faster than anything else, and I had to keep snipping off the leaves, for tobacco was a monopoly of the state and it was against the law to grow tobacco in our gardens in France.

Along about the middle of April, Dominique, the resistance worker from Melun, came to see me again. He asked if it would be possible to use my house on the plain as a depot for receiving and hiding materials from England dropped out of planes by parachutes. Dominique said that some of the planes might have to land in my field if they were carrying delicate or explosive stuff. Dominique had the right to operate a truck because he was employed by a construction company that repaired bridges and culverts and did some work for the Germans. He brought over a surveyor, who examined my ground to see how level it was. While the surveyor was at work, Dominique asked if I slept in the house on the plain. I told him that I had not yet begun to do so but intended to because rabbits were getting caught in my traps, and I had to run out at once and hit them on the head with a club before they screamed too long and attracted the German patrols who were out in the neighborhood. The German penalty for trapping was now three years in prison, or, if you were a young Frenchman, forced labor in Germany.

Shortly after this visit, I moved my geese, chickens, ducks, and rabbits over to the property on the plain, which made it appear all the more logical for me to spend my nights there, in case villagers and Germans became suspicious.



After having dinner with Nadine at the house in Barbizon and listening to the nine o'clock BBC broadcast, I went every night to sleep in my *Maison du Crime*.

The gray stone house with a red tile roof had been built about fifteen years before and had two stories. It had two large glass double doors, originally the entrance to a garage, which you saw as you approached the house from the road. These now led into the salon, and on one side of the salon was a large pit which had been used to repair automobiles when the place had been a garage. I kept bales of hay in this pit. I kept the doors open on all fine spring and summer nights, because this appearance of innocence was something of a protection against passing Germans who might otherwise have been tempted to search the place. Off the salon with the pit was a kitchen with a window that gave a view of the beautiful flat plain. On the left as you entered the house was a small room and another window giving on the plain. Here I locked my geese at night to prevent anyone from stealing them.

These geese proved very good company for me in my loneliness. They chattered until they got sleepy. My favorite, "Jimmie," had a habit of waddling up behind Ondie and nipping her with his beak, and he did the same with people. He was as good as a watchdog, for he began chattering excitedly as soon as he heard someone approaching. Early in our pastoral life Ondie had turned on another of the geese and ripped open its neck, which I had to sew up again carefully. I gave her a beating, and thereafter she and the geese played together happily. I locked up the geese

at night because they were my most valuable animals until I got the pig, Juliette, for a well-fattened goose gave almost four pounds of precious grease. Though neither of us minded killing chickens, or skinning rabbits, Nadine and I did not have the heart to kill one of the lovely, friendly geese, and we always got one of the neighboring farmers to do that job.

Upstairs were two small bedrooms, and from here I could look for miles over the treetops of the huge Forest of Fontainebleau. There was a sense of spaciousness and isolation in this house on the plain that was stirring, peaceful, and sad. The air was clear and exhilarating, and I felt healthier here than in any other part of France in which I had ever lived.

From my upstairs window I could see the poachers when they came out at dawn to discover whether they had caught anything in their traps. The woods surrounding me were full of snares, and the presence of so many poachers in the neighborhood was one thing that made the house dangerous for resistance work, but there were so many other advantages that we had to take the risk of prowling strangers. About twenty feet from the house was a fenced-in enclosure where I kept forty white rabbits, who played about among the rocks. A poacher thought he was seeing things when they got out one day and ran into the forest. By nightfall all but four or five had returned home.

One night shortly after my talk with Dominique I was awakened by him at my house on the plain. He told me that he expected a truck that night with arms and ammuni-

tion for me to hide. Dominique came in, and we sat on the bales of hay in the pit in the middle of the salon, smoking Gauloises Bleus. The night was clear and quiet, and the only noise we heard was that of the screech owls. This was my first contact with smuggling for resistance, and I was excited. Dominique said that the resistance forces had received a "drop" from England near Milly, and he wanted to store the stuff on my place for a few days. He also wanted to hide a fugitive there, but I objected to this because the woodcutter who came every day to help me might see him. I offered to keep the man in my house in Barbizon for the night and get him on the bus for Melun early next morning.

About midnight the truck appeared and drove slowly without lights up the dirt road. Two men were in it. Dominique helped them unload some cases and boxes which they put underneath the bales of hay in my living room. One of the men in the truck was a small, young Breton who had been dropped by parachute by the RAF. He was the one I was to hide. Dominique left on his bicycle for Melun. The other Frenchman drove off in the truck, and I walked across the plain with the Breton to my house in Barbizon where he was to spend the rest of the night. He told me that in England they called him "Deek," and that he had been training at a sabotage school outside London, where he was taught particularly how to use explosives.

Nadine's light went on in her bedroom upstairs after we entered the little salon, and I went up to explain that it was a Frenchman who was planning to escape across the

line of demarcation next day and told her that I had found him wandering around, lost on the plain. This was my first contact with anyone from England since I had returned to occupied France in 1940. I asked whether they felt in England that our liberation would come soon, and he said that it was much too early to expect it, but that we must never lose hope. He was full of praise for the great courage and skill of the English. He said that when he parachuted down on the soil of France, which he had not touched since he left his home in Brittany in a small boat after the fall of France, he took a moment to caress the ground. He talked freely about his family and his former life, but he would say nothing about his present work. About three in the morning I showed him his bed, set the alarm clock for him, and walked back with Ondie to my house on the plain.

Next morning I felt very cheerful in the bright sunshine as I went about my work with my secret, feeding my hungry animals, and I hailed the peasants working in the near-by fields with a heartier greeting. I felt more cheerful because I now had tangible evidence of the work that was going on all over France and England by organizations planning for our liberation. I rode over to Barbizon on my bicycle, had my bath and breakfast, and listened to the BBC broadcast with renewed interest. "Deek" had gone, and Nadine was curious about him, but I told her merely that he was a Frenchman from the North trying to reach his family in the South. I hoped that this kind of distraction from my loneliness would happen every night, but it didn't.

Two days later Dominique came on his bicycle to tell

me that a truck would arrive for the cases of goods that night. He said that his chief in Melun wanted to know whether I needed money. I sensed that he was trying in a careful way to discover whether I needed a price to keep me on the right side, and I said I needed nothing. I asked Dominique eagerly what was to happen next, and he said, "Don't be impatient, Madame, we can only win by patience."

For the Whitsuntide week end in May, when so many people in Paris were accustomed to going to the country, I had Robert and Annie Lamour and Germaine Fraysse as my guests in Barbizon. We spent the time weeding the garden, hunting illegally, and cutting wood. I had become an experienced *chasseur*, and in one night I managed to catch as many as seven rabbits and some pheasants. I needed all the game I could get, for I was sending food packages into Paris constantly for friends who needed them so desperately.

During that week end Robert Lamour took me aside and asked whether I had had any contact with the resistance people Jean Fraysse had known. I did not tell him about the consignment of arms and ammunition because I knew that a cardinal principle of resistance was, as Jean Fraysse had impressed upon me, to let only such people in on a secret as were necessary to a particular operation, no matter how much one might trust them. I told him that I was not involved in any resistance work. Then he asked if I would like to come into Paris during the following week and meet some Americans.

"We are beginning to get English and American aviators who have fallen in France," Lamour told me, "and the group I am working with is getting them out of the country. We need all the help we can get."

I told him that I would like nothing better than to meet the Americans and to help in this work. He also asked whether I could put up in my place in Barbizon some of the French boys who were trying to escape the forced-labor draft. The food problem in Paris was getting so difficult that it was impossible to take care of these boys for long in the city before they went on down to an address in the Midi where they were supplied with false papers. At this time Laval was doing all he could to help the Germans draft Frenchmen for labor in Germany. Dr. Lamour had managed with great difficulty to get his own brother a false medical certificate stating that he had syphilis. Young men were being rounded up in the cafés of Paris in hordes, and it was necessary to get them out of the city. I was delighted to help in this work too.

Denise Tual arrived at my house during this Whitsuntide holiday, and she, too, told me that things were beginning to "cook" in Paris. She offered me money, which I refused, but I told her of the pictures I had picked up at the country auction and said I thought one was a genuine Daumier, which I wanted to sell. I brought out from the mass of stuff stored in the studio in my courtyard a small canvas signed by Daumier. The painting showed the figures of two old men looking at what seemed to be a Testament. Denise gave me the address in Paris of a dealer who was

fair, and a few days later I took him the Daumier, for which he gave me 60,000 francs, after having it examined by an expert. In the pile of canvases I had picked up at the auction there was also a painting by Dufy. It was a charming picture of a woman with a parasol and several other people on a pier. I thought I would like to hang it in my little salon in Barbizon, and I took it into Paris to have it framed at a picture store on the *quais*. I had no idea who Dufy was, but a man looking over my shoulder in the picture store did. He asked me if I wanted to sell the picture. "No, not particularly," I answered. "It's so pretty I thought I would have it framed and keep it." "I'll give you 30,000 francs for it," he said, and pulled out the notes. "Skip the frame," I told the dealer and handed over the picture, for 30,000 francs were more valuable to me at the moment than any picture.

Denise Tual had told me about the Pléiade concerts which had been organized in Paris, at which music by Jews and Russians, forbidden by the Germans, was played. The concerts were held in the Paris Conservatoire and were for invited guests only, which made it impossible for the Germans to object that it was a public performance. Resistance people attended, and the concerts were supported by Gallimard, the well-known French publisher, whose company had been taken over by the Nazis. On that trip into Paris I attended one of these concerts. The Frenchwomen in the audience made their best effort to look elegant in their made-over finery. That night the concert was devoted to the music of Rameau, and I sat in a corner in

my old clothes and enjoyed it fully, for this was the first touch of town life I had encountered in many months.

At the concert I met "Baron" Molet, whom I had not seen since some time before my departure for the internment camp at Vittel. He told me that he, Paul Eluard, Picasso, and others of Jean Fraysse's friends were feeling very pessimistic about his fate. They had been listening for messages on broadcasts from Algiers, since resistance people in Africa were transmitting messages frequently that way, but no word from Jean or about him had arrived. All of us were sure that if he were alive, he would have managed to get some word to Paris, for he had excellent contacts and was resourceful.

Next morning I met Robert Lamour at the Gare de Lyon. He had with him two Frenchmen about twenty-three years old whom I was to take with me to Barbizon, where they were to remain until called for to be taken South, to avoid the forced-labor draft. The boys and I talked very little on the train, for it was important that the other passengers should not hear my American accent. In Barbizon matters were easier, and indeed the main problem for me during the few days these boys remained with me was to get bread for them, for bread was one of the things unobtainable on the black market. With the aid of friends, including Marion Greenough, and the co-operation of the Barbizon bakery, however, we managed to feed them until their departure.

One day in the Barbizon bakery I met a girl with rosy cheeks and a face that was obviously English who was car-



rying a beautiful blond baby in her arms. She spoke French with an English accent, and when I asked her whether she was English, she replied, "Yes, with a Yorkshire accent." Her name was Kay Devigne, and she was married to a Frenchman, Robert Devigne, with whose aunt, Mme. Luce Cohn, she was staying in Barbizon. I had seen Mme. Cohn often in the village and asked Kay Devigne whether she was a widow. "She might just as well be," Kay answered. "Her husband is a Jew and has had to hide since the occupation." The husband's brother had been locked up in Drancy and was caught with a group that was trying to tunnel its way out. The Germans punished them by making them lie out in the open on a bitter winter night without any clothes. Three of the group had died of exposure. Then the Germans locked up the others in the Gare d'Austerlitz two floors under the ground, where thirteen Jewish men and women were confined in one underground room. A bucket in the middle of the room was their only sanitary appliance. They were forced to wrap up furniture and paintings the Germans had confiscated from Jewish homes and were shipping into Germany. Both M. Cohn and his brother, Kay Devigne told me, had received decorations for valor in the war of 1914-18 and had taken part in this war.

Kay Devigne brought her husband, Robert, to my house for tea that afternoon. He had been a textile manufacturer in Amiens, where his workers went on strike rather than fill a German order for material for uniforms, and thus he was able to shut down the mills and move some of his looms

away before the Germans confiscated the property. It was later bombed to bits by the RAF.

A friendship sprang up quickly between the Devignes, their aunt, and me, and we visited regularly. One Sunday the Devignes and I went on our bicycles to an auction at Bois-le-Roi. The effects of a former judge were being sold, and there were many books in the sale as well as household goods. I managed to get a set of Dickens in French for thirty francs. During the winter months I had enjoyed Jane Austen's novels because they took me into another century which seemed so placid compared with our own, and I thought Dickens might have the same effect. There was also a beautiful edition of Diderot's *Encyclopedia* in fine leather bindings which was put up. I had seen Diderot listed in book catalogues from my father-in-law's library and thought this set might be valuable. When I bid for it, my only competitors were a bearded old farmer and a young French boy, and I got the set for 500 francs.

It was dark when we started on our twenty-kilometer ride back to Barbizon, with the heavy books and beer mugs Robert had bought for his wife in the baskets of our bicycles. At Chailly we ran into the German control. An elderly German officer looked at our papers and our purchases with the aid of a flashlight. He picked up a volume of Diderot from my basket and asked: "Is this complete? How much did you pay for it?"

"Five hundred francs," I replied.

"Do you want to sell it?" the German asked. "I'll give you twice that price."

"It is not for sale," I answered. "What do you, a German soldier, want with Diderot's *Encyclopedia*?"

"*Madame*," he answered, "it is one of the greatest works ever written." He looked at me and added sadly, "I was a bookseller in Munich before this war." It was heartbreaking to see the nostalgia in the old man's face, and after we rode on, I told Robert that he seemed to be a nice German and I would have liked to talk with him longer. "He's wearing the Nazi uniform," Robert said.

Nadine and I both read *Gone With the Wind* that spring, Nadine in the French edition called *Autant porte le vent*. "When the American Army arrives," Nadine said, "I am going to pick out a Rhett Butler." After liberation she looked at each of the first American soldiers she saw and remarked, "He doesn't look like Rhett Butler."

*Gone With the Wind* was particularly fascinating to us because we were doing in Barbizon many of the things Scarlett O'Hara did on her plantation. We made clothes out of curtains and bedsheets, for example. I still have several blouses made of those sheets, and my summer dress for 1943 came from my rose linen bath curtains. Some of the butler's uniforms from my father-in-law's château made fine little broadcloth suits for the children of friends of mine in the village. We saved every nail from a box and every scrap of paper, wire, leather, and string.

We were short of so many things as the occupation dragged on that life became a combination of scrounging and parsimony. The farmers had a particularly hard time getting material to bind their sheaves of grain, for there

was no string available, and the paper substitute fell apart quickly in damp weather. In addition to scarcities we were plagued by French and German regulations and by nasty potato bugs called *doryphores*, a name which the French peasants quickly adopted for the Germans. I had to spray my potato plants with poison to kill the *doryphores*, but there was no remedy as yet for the Germans. Six of my rabbits died when some of the poison from the potato plants remained on dandelion leaves. Food was getting so scarce that it was a great temptation to eat them, but Nadine and I did not quite dare. I was finally able to buy a pig that summer of 1943 from a dealer at La Chapelle de la Reine. The regulation was that you were only allowed to buy one pig every six months and were never to own two pigs at a time. You had to butcher the first before you could buy the second. We also had to declare the number of other animals we owned, but the *garde champêtre* who came to list my livestock was co-operative, and he solemnly wrote down the two chickens and geese I had declared, looking the other way as my other chickens and geese flocked around him. Eggs were among our most valuable products, and my white leghorns laid regularly and abundantly. I had brought them up according to the instructions in the books I read. My peasant neighbors laughed at the trouble I took, but I got more eggs than they did. Chicken manure mixed with wood ashes helped my tomato plants, and I got over two hundred pounds of tomatoes, which Nadine and I put up as sauce in bottles, since it was impossible to get Mason jars or sterilizing or canning equipment. We and our friends



*Mme. Bouvie, Barbizon neighbor, and Drue Tartière*

entlassen am: 11. 12. 1942

## BESCHEINIGUNG

1. ~~Name~~ Die TARTISKE, Dorothy  
 geboren 12.6.02, Kenosha  
 Ausweis Id.Karte Nr. 39 AS 56277 v. 25.11.39., Paris  
 Wohnsitz BARBIZON (S.-E.-L. Strasse)  
 wird auf Anordnung des Mil. Bef. in Frankreich, ~~dem Internierungslager~~ <sup>Bechl. d. Sicherheitspol. d. 3D 1. Bef. d. 14.12.1942 aus Vittel</sup> entlassen und kehrt in ~~ihren~~ <sup>verloren</sup> bisherigen ~~Wohnort~~ <sup>Wohnort</sup>  
 Aufenthaltsort BARBIZON  
 Strasse Grande Rue zurueck.
2. ~~Name~~ Die Genannte unterliegt dort wiederum der Meldepflicht und hat sich bei der zustandigen ~~Militärkommandantur~~ <sup>Militärkommandantur</sup> zu melden, 84 Av. Poch., Paris
3. Alle Behörden werden gebeten, ~~den~~ <sup>den</sup> Genannten ungehindert zurueckreisen zu lassen und ~~ihnen~~ <sup>ihnen</sup> hierbei Schutz und Hilfe zu gewahren.
4. Diese Bescheinigung berechtigt den Inhaber zur freien Benutzung der Verkehrsmittel in die Heimat.
5. ~~Im Auftrag der Mil. Bef. in Frankreich gilt diese Bescheinigung zugleich als einmaliger Ausweis zum Ueberschreiten der Nord-Or-Lille in Richtung Westfront.~~  
 Entlassungsgrund: ~~sich - oben - Attest.~~



*Sanatanti*  
 Oberstleutnant und Kommandeur  
 Hauptmann u. Unterkommandant.

Entlassungsliste Nr. 2666

Der Befehlshaber  
 der Sicherheitspolizei und des SD  
 im Bereich des Militärbefehlshabers  
 in Frankreich

II-pol/4.

Die Anmeldung der umseitig Genannten ist am 14.12.1942 bei der  
 hiesigen Dienststelle erfolgt.

Im Auftrage

## TRANSLATION

Concentration Camp 194

Vittel, Dec. 5, 1942  
Freed on Dec. 11, 1942

### CERTIFICATE

1. Name: TARTIERE, Dorothy  
Born: June 12, 1903 Kenosha  
Identification: Identification card No. 39 AS 58277 issued Nov. 29, 1939, Paris  
Residence: BARBIZON (S.e.M)  
On order of the Chief of the Security Police and of the SD in the region of the Commander-in-Chief in France, is dismissed from the concentration camp at Vittel and is returned to her former Residence: BARBIZON  
Street: Grande Rue
2. The aforementioned will be subject there to report regularly and is to do so at the appropriate army office. 84 Avenue Foch, Paris.
3. All officials are requested to permit the aforementioned to make her return journey unhindered, and to afford her therein help and protection.
4. This certificate entitles the holder to free transportation to her home.
5. Reason for liberation: see above. Attest:

(Seal)

(Signature illegible)  
Captain and Assistant Commandant

Number on dismissal list: 2666

---

Office of the Chief of the Security Police  
and of the SD in the region of the  
Commander-in-Chief in France.  
II-pol/4

The person named on the other side has presented herself on Dec. 12, 1942 at the aforementioned office.

By order of  
(signature illegible)

Der Befehlshaber  
der Sicherheitspolizei und des SD  
im Bereich des Militärbefehlshabers  
in Frankreich

Paris, den 14.12.1942

II-pol/4/624/3

Frau Dorothy Tartiere  
Rue Grande  
Barbizon (Seine et Marne)

Sie erhalten hiermit die Genehmigung, sich zwecks ärztlicher Behandlung regelmäßig nach Paris zu begeben.

Die Ihnen obliegende Meldepflicht bleibt bestehen.

Im Auftrage

1. Obersturmführer

### TRANSLATION

Chief of the Security Police  
and the SD in the region of the  
Commander-in-Chief in France  
II-pol/4/624/3

Paris, Dec. 14, 1942

Frau Dorothy Tartiere  
Rue Grande  
Barbizon (Seine et Marne)

You hereby receive permission to go to Paris at regular intervals for medical treatment.

Your former duty to report regularly remains in effect.

By order of  
(signature illegible)  
Obersturmführer



needed every scrap of food we could raise, and it was exasperating not to be able to preserve or can it. We raised a lot of beans, however, for it was possible to hang them up to dry.

The long rides on a bicycle were among the most wearing and strenuous necessities of occupation. At least twice a week I had to make trips at night to La Chapelle de la Reine to buy black-market grain for my animals. The seventy-pound sacks were hard to handle on the big rack attached to the front wheel of the bicycle, and when the sack fell off coming down the steep hill from La Chapelle de la Reine it was hard to heave it back on again.

One night about eleven-thirty I was coming down that hill with a sack of grain and four liters of milk when I suddenly saw the headlights of an automobile coming fast around the bend in the road ahead of me. I knew that only a German car could be on the roads with lights at that hour. I managed to get my bicycle over against a stone wall, but the milk and the big sack of grain fell off in the middle of the road. I unfastened the strap holding the milk and used it to tug the sack of grain over to the wall but had no time to rescue the milk, which remained in the middle of the road. I had no identity papers with me. The automobile approached fast, and the brakes were put on as my bag with milk loomed up in the middle of the road in the light of the headlights, but the Germans were obviously in a great hurry, for the car swerved fast around the milk and kept right on going. They did not see me crouching against the wall. I managed to hoist the heavy sack back into the

bicycle rack, strapped the milk on again, and started the long pedal to Barbizon with a fierce headwind against me. When I wasn't swearing, I was weeping with exasperation, fatigue, and discouragement. In the west, to the left of me, I saw great flames shooting up into the sky, and my first thought was that the Germans had set fire to the Château de Courances in that direction as punishment for some offense against them.

At the Macherin crossroads I was stopped by the *garde champêtre*, a sort of village constable, who knew me. He told me to get back to Barbizon as fast as I could. "The Boches are rounding up everybody they can find. They claim the Communists burned the haystacks at Cely-en-Bière. It isn't the Communists, it's the resistance men who are against farmers who sell their grain to the Germans. I know that farm, and I know they got their *cercueil* two weeks ago." Resistance men were sending collaborators and those who dealt with Germans small black wooden coffins. These ominous warnings were put in mailboxes or left on doorsteps in cities, towns, villages, and farmhouses all over France at this time.

Halfway from the Macherin crossroads to Barbizon I was plodding up a steep grade, when I saw headlights again. I threw myself and my bicycle quickly into the big drainage ditch on the side of the road, not caring what happened to the milk or anything else as I flattened my face down in the ditch. A car full of Germans went swiftly by. Picking myself up again, I got the grain and the milk back on the bicycle and went on. When I finally arrived home, I

was too weary to unload, and Nadine did that for me. She had been worried about me when she heard German cars rushing by and saw flames in the distance. She suggested that if we killed the pig Juliette now it would save me from so many dangerous bicycle trips at night, but I would not do that, for I was thinking of next winter and I knew how much we were going to need all the meat, fat, and grease we could get out of her when she got big enough. But my discouragement was such that I wept some more in my bedroom that night and wondered how much longer this harsh existence would go on.

On June 30, 1943, Winston Churchill in a speech at the Guildhall, London, said: "I cannot go further today than to say this—very probably there will be heavy fighting in the Mediterranean and elsewhere before the leaves fall." French people took this to mean that the long-awaited second front in France was coming before the leaves of the autumn of 1943 fell. The entire population was keyed up. Young Frenchmen made for the mountains of the Haute-Savoie and elsewhere to join the Maquis. German soldiers were shot in the streets and on lonely roads. At the cross-roads of Macherin resistance men strung a cable across the road at night and caught a Gestapo motorcycle and sidecar. They killed one of the Germans, but the other got away. In Barbizon we were terrified that the Germans would take hostages from our village for this exploit, but they decided to take them from Fontainebleau. In Paris everyone you met was expecting D-Day any minute. I bet the Pouteau family, farmer neighbors of mine, a goose dinner that the

invasion would come between summer and the end of 1943.

When we invaded Italy in September, and later when Italy signed an armistice, there was a new wave of optimism, though many of us now realized that Churchill had intended to refer to the Italian expedition rather than any attempt in France. The day of the Italian surrender and for some time thereafter the Germans were very glum, and the French became cocky and more openly defiant. When shopkeepers in our village refused frankly to sell to German soldiers, the Germans walked out without the spirit to protest. In the South of France, we learned, the Italians were selling their arms, their uniforms and shirts and whatever else they possessed.

Toward November, when the expected invasion of France failed to materialize, the Nazis started dropping paper leaves all over Paris to ridicule Churchill. On the front pages of the leading newspapers, too, these leaves appeared, and in the veins of the leaves the Nazis printed ridicule and vituperation against Churchill.

## II

ONE HOT AUGUST night in 1943, after I had gone to bed in my house on the plain, I suddenly heard the noise of airplanes overhead, and I realized from the sound of the motors that these were not German planes. I was stiff and tired from having learned that day to use a scythe to cut my first crop of red clover for winter fodder for my rabbits. As I lay in bed, listening carefully, I suddenly heard Jimmie

the gander chatter excitedly and Ondie began to bark. I rushed downstairs in my pajamas, carrying with me the *serpe*, a hooked instrument with a heavy blade which I used for hacking at wood. A rabbit was screaming in one of my traps in the little park, and I hurried in that direction to hit it on the head. I thought that someone was trying to steal my animals and followed Ondie's lead to the end of the orchard. I bent down to take the rabbit out of the trap when something moved beside me, and I realized that a man was lying alongside a big rock. My first thought was that he was trying to steal the rabbit, and I shouted at him in French, "If you move, I'll kill you." I held up over my head the sharp, heavy *serpe*. The man answered in French with an accent, "I won't move." He got up from the ground, while I still stood over him in my pajamas with my axlike weapon raised to strike. It suddenly seemed like a ridiculous scene, and we both started to laugh.

"Are you English?" I asked.

"If I should be—" he answered, and then added, "Would Canadian do?"

He had a pack on his back, and he pulled a musette bag up from the ground near by.

"Well, with that face you certainly can't be a German," I said.

"I don't know who you are," he said, "but I think I've found a friend."

"I think you have," I answered. "Come on into the house."

As we sat on the piles of hay in the pit of my living room,

smoking, the Canadian would not reveal where he came from. I had had no word from any resistance people of any expected arrival that night, and I was wondering how authentic this fellow was, even though he looked all right. "I'm a bit of a foreigner around here, and I've got to be moving on, I've a bit of a mission," he said. While we were sitting there, a man arrived on a bicycle. It was after eleven at night. I was afraid this new arrival might be a German patrol who had noticed the Canadian dropping near my place. We sat still in the dark and listened. The man went over to the well and let down the bucket and took a drink of water. While he was doing that, Jimmie the gander began chattering at him, and I heard him say in French, "Stop it, Jimmie." As there were very few people who knew Jimmie's name, I realized that it must be a friend, and we were able to breathe again. I went out of the house and saw Dominique.

"I'm sorry I'm late," Dominique said. "We've been out here searching back of the house. We've had a bad 'drop.' The stuff has gone all over the plain. I don't know how much we've lost, but I know there must be twenty-two cases of stuff scattered around between here and Forges."

"I was strewn around, too," the Canadian said, as he came out of the house, "and there are two others like me somewhere about."

Dominique decided that they had better go out on the plain and signal with green and white flashlights they had for that purpose. I suggested they come to my place in Barbizon for something to eat, but Dominique said there

wasn't time, as everything had been previously arranged. "We take care of feeding them," Dominique said, "but what's worrying me is that we must get those cases out of the fields. Who owns the property next to yours?"

"Pouteau," I answered. "They are good people."

Dominique and the Canadian went off, and Dominique came back at about four in the morning. Then he went over to the Pouteau farm and arranged with Robert Pouteau to search for the scattered cases. Robert and his Breton workers rounded up all but two of them and hid them under branches in the high wheat fields until Dominique could send for them. While they were about this they had to watch out for the Germans who occupied the Château de Fleury not far away and for Germans who might be hunting in the neighborhood.

About a week after this incident Dominique arrived again and told me that they had a load of stuff at Milly which had been dropped from planes there the night before; he needed a truck, as his own *camion* had broken down. I told him of a German soldier stationed at Fleury who used to pass by my place every day and who I had heard once rented his Army truck to Père Jean, proprietor of the Café Clef-d'Or, next to my house in Barbizon. Père Jean had told me that the young German was anti-Nazi and was trying to earn enough money so that he could desert from the German Army. I first suggested that Dominique use Robilliard's truck, for I was sure of the garageman, but he said that truck was not big enough and decided we ought to try to get the German truck.

"It would be just right," Dominique said, "and maybe he would also rent us his uniform and his papers. If we got those we could go all the way down in one trip to where we want to leave the stuff."

I agreed to sound out Bobbie, the German soldier, when he came by that evening and arranged with Dominique to telephone him at Chailly and let him know the result.

My acquaintance with Bobbie dated from a conversation he had started with me one evening some time before, when he heard me calling Ondie in English. He said, "Come here" sounded like German, and asked, "*Sprechen Sie deutsch?*" I told him I was an American and did not know German. He said that he liked Americans and that it was a great tragedy that his country and mine were at war. He asked what I was doing in France, and I told him that my husband was French and was very ill, and that I had to work the land to support myself. Next time he walked by, Bobbie brought his wife, a lovely Italian girl, and introduced her. On their way back from the café in Barbizon they brought me a cold bottle of beer. I was afraid of these attentions and did not want to encourage them, but when I discussed the German and his wife with Père Jean, whose café they frequented, he said that the blond German soldier was the first good German he'd met of all the soldiers who came into his place, and told me of his transaction with him for the hire of his truck for 10,000 francs so that Père Jean could go to La Chapelle de la Reine to get several hundred kilos of potatoes. He also mentioned that the young German sold him gasoline. I



suggested that Bobbie might be a "plant," but Père Jean did not think so.

On the evening of the day Dominique came to see me about a truck, Bobbie came by my place as usual about six o'clock and greeted me. He had asked me what Americans said when they greeted one another, and I wrote in the dust with a stick, "Hi." He thought it very German and used to greet me that way thereafter. As he leaned on the fence that night I asked him whether he was interested in making money to retire on in France. He looked surprised, but answered that that was his idea. Then he said that his wife had had some silk stockings sent from Italy and asked if I would like to buy a dozen pairs. I told him that I didn't need silk stockings in my kind of life and couldn't afford them.

"How would you like to make quite a lot of money tonight?" I asked. He was interested at once. I told him that I had a friend with a sick son who was wanted by the French police, and that my friend wanted to take his son to another town and needed a German truck and uniform so that he would not be stopped by either the French or German police.

"How much will he pay?" Bobbie asked.

"I think he will go as high as 20,000 francs," I answered, and Bobbie said he would be delighted to do it at that price. "How about your uniform and papers?" I asked.

"Yes, they can borrow those too, but what will I do in the meantime?" Bobbie asked.

"Bring your wife here at nine o'clock and we'll play a

game of *belote*. I can lend you a dressing gown and can even offer you both a bottle of good champagne." We shook hands on the bargain.

"It doesn't bother my conscience to do these things," Bobbie said. "I love the French, and I realize what they are going through."

I hurried over to Robilliard's garage in Barbizon, where there was a telephone, and called the number Dominique had given me. "*Ça y est*," I told him. "Be at my house on the plain at nine o'clock." I was excited and nervous, and it was hard for me to eat much dinner that night. I got out of the house with the magnum of champagne without Nadine seeing me, and when I got back to the house on the plain, I put the bottle in a pail and lowered it into the well.

Bobbie arrived in his German Army truck promptly at nine, and his wife appeared soon afterwards on foot. She brought me a small bottle of perfume as a gift. Bobbie parked his truck on the road below my property so that neighboring farmers who might pass by would not see it within my enclosure, and he and his wife came into the house. I still had a De Pinna dressing gown which had belonged to my husband. It was of blue rayon with yellow dots. Bobbie took off his green German uniform and put on the dressing gown. He swished around in admiration of himself.

When Dominique arrived, he was amused at the sight and kept saying, "*Vraiment magnifique!*" He told Bobbie that he was a patriot and that his wife looked "*vraiment*

*française*," which pleased both of them very much. Dominique came from Alsace, spoke German without an accent, and with his blond hair and Alsatian features could easily pass for a German. He produced a bottle of marc, and we drank the toast: "*Vive la France!*" Then Dominique changed into Bobbie's uniform; it did not fit him too well, for Bobbie was quite tall, but we decided it was good enough to pass. Bobbie explained his papers to Dominique, told him the gasoline tank was full and there was an extra *bidon* of gas behind the front seat, and gave him instructions on how to pass the German control at Milly. Dominique figured that if his friend and his son were ready when he arrived to pick them up, he could make the trip and be back in about four hours. I had arranged with Dominique when he first came to see me that we would use the story of a friend with a sick son. Then Dominique put 20,000 francs down on a bale of hay in my living room and said, "There it is, in case I don't come back."

"If you don't come back, I'm a dead man," Bobbie said. He was a little embarrassed about taking the money and explained to me, "I am taking such a big risk, and I must get money to buy a little place in this country."

Dominique drove off in the German truck. I went to the well and pulled up the magnum of cold champagne. It was a warm night, so we sat outside at a little table under the trees. The mosquitoes bit Bobbie's bare legs as we sat in the dark with Ondie lying cosily in the German soldier's lap. Jimmie the gander and the other geese wandered around murmuring contentedly, for they loved company.

My neighbors all lived at some distance, and even if one of them passed by, he would not have thought the scene unusual, for they were accustomed to my having Robert and Annie Lamour and other guests from Paris from time to time. I drank to my guests' future happiness, called Bobbie a *brave garçon*, and drank to the *brave garçon* of their own I hoped they would have one day.

Bobbie told me something of his family in Germany. His father had been a prosperous leather merchant in Hamburg until the outbreak of the war, when both his parents had to move and change their names because they were anti-Nazi. Bobbie's army papers declared him to be an orphan whose next of kin was his father's sister. His wife came from Milan and was visiting some Italian friends in Paris when they met. She had been raised in a convent in France and expressed anti-Fascist sentiments.

They were curious about me and asked about my husband. I brought out a picture of Jacques to show them and said that he was tubercular and had to live in the mountains. I told them of my childhood on a ranch in Mexico and explained that it was not too difficult for me to work on the land because I had spent my early life with people who made their living that way. Bobbie had read Erskine Caldwell's *God's Little Acre* in French, and he wanted to know whether his characters were typical of the American peasantry. I explained that Caldwell's work was highly imaginative as well as realistic and that I did not think they gave an impression of the typical American. He asked if I had more books like that in French, and I offered to lend

him *La Route de tabac*, the French edition of *Tobacco Road*, as well as *Les Souris et les hommes*, the French edition of Steinbeck's *Of Mice and Men*. Bobbie told me that he had great admiration for the work of Marcel Proust. He was interested in the Indians of the United States because as a child in Hamburg he had seen a book with gory illustrations called *Custer's Last Fight*. He was also interested in the Mormons and wanted to know whether polygamy still existed.

As the champagne began to work on me I realized what a strange experience this was, sitting on a summer night in occupied France during 1943 with a German soldier and his Italian wife, discussing Erskine Caldwell, Brigham Young, Custer, and Marcel Proust, while all of our lives hung by a thread. We avoided discussing Germany or the Nazis, and there was no mention of any resistance work in France. Bobbie was sentimental at the idea that he was renting his truck to help a sick French boy who was wanted by the police, and I was quite content to let him cling to that illusion. He wanted to hear music and to sing and asked if I had a radio. I had a dry-cell battery set, but this seemed scarcely the occasion for using it, and I told him that I had no radio because there was no electricity in the house.

Dominique came back at about one in the morning. He had another man with him, which bothered all of us. "My friend wishes to thank the soldier," Dominique explained. The other man shook hands with Bobbie and said, "You have saved a life, thank you." Bobbie quickly changed into

his uniform, looking rather regretfully at the blue and yellow dressing gown, put his 20,000 francs into his pocket, and hoisted his wife up into the German Army truck.

"It has been one of the pleasantest evenings my wife and I have spent since we have been married," Bobbie said and gave a benediction in German over my head. They drove off down the dirt road without lights. Dominique and his friend came into the house, and we each had a stiff drink of marc as we sat on the bales of hay.

"We'll have a real celebration one of these days," Dominique said, "and it won't be far off."

I took the two Frenchmen to the entrance gate to my place and held on to the heavy bell attached to the gate so that it would not make any sound in the still, summer air. After they had gone, I went back into the house, satisfied at a good night's work, but feeling suddenly very lonely with no one to talk to about it except Ondie and Jimmie the gander.

Bobbie and his wife passed by frequently thereafter. I lent him *Tobacco Road* and *Of Mice and Men*, and we had a few pleasant chats at the garden gate. Not long after he had rented us his truck for the night, Bobbie disappeared from the neighborhood. Père Jean told me that the Gestapo men had come to the Clef-d'Or to inquire about him. Bobbie had said that if he were called up for duty on the Russian front, he would desert, and the Germans were sending many of their men from our area to that front at this time. At Fleury Bobbie was an instructor in the motorcycle training school and also drove the supply truck for the establish-

ment. He was a noncommissioned officer, and he told me that his commanding officer at Fleury was an easy man to work for and that he had had no difficulty in falsifying gasoline certificates. After his sudden disappearance, however, the Germans discovered he had been selling gasoline and began to look for the buyers. Early one morning when I arrived back at my house in Barbizon from the house on the plain, I discovered a sack had been thrown into my garden during the night. It contained a fifteen-gallon drum of gasoline. A few minutes after I had found it, Père Jean rang my bell and told me that he had thrown the drum into the garden because the Germans were coming to search his place at any moment.

"But suppose they come here?" I asked. I was frightened that by some mischance the Gestapo might have got word of the transaction concerning Bobbie's truck. With the help of Nadine I hoisted the drum of gasoline onto my bicycle and hid it in one of the caves in the forest. The Germans arrived to search the Clef-d'Or that day, and it cost Père Jean four bottles of cognac to put them in good humor. They found nothing on his premises, and then Père Jean came to me and demanded his gasoline. In compensation for the danger he had caused for me and the trouble, I demanded four liters of the gasoline to give to the man who sawed my wood to use in his machine.

Nothing more was heard of Bobbie in our neighborhood until May, 1944. He was caught in civilian clothes outside Lyon, where he and his wife were living on a small farm. The Nazis brought him back to Fleury and executed him

in the courtyard of the Château in front of a firing squad. I never have learned what happened to his lovely wife.

### III

I GOT UP at dawn on August 23 to work in my garden before the sun got too hot. During the heat of the day Nadine and I were both resting when the bell rang and two German police troopers came in. They said they had a car waiting outside and were instructed to take me to Paris for questioning. They permitted me to change my clothes, were polite, but refused any information on why I was being taken. I knew that this time I was not being sent for merely because I was an American citizen, and I was frightened that someone had denounced me or that the Gestapo had begun to suspect that I was not so ill as I had pretended and was doing odd jobs for the resistance movement. The Germans told me to bring along my various passes and identity papers.

We drove toward Melun instead of Paris, and my guards told me that I was going to Paris by train, as gasoline was short. They said that a railroad compartment on a prisoner-of-war train had been reserved for us. A freight train stood on a siding at Melun, and the engine had steam up. Attached to it were cattle cars, filled with cows and sheep, and a cabooselike car, into which my guards escorted me and turned over my dossier to a Nazi soldier. They said a lot to him in German, which I did not understand. The train pulled out, and we went slowly as far as Villeneuve-



Saint-Georges, where we were shunted onto another siding. In another compartment of my car were four Frenchmen, apparently political prisoners. When I started to talk with them through the open window, the Nazi guard made me pull up the window and shut me up.

We were on the siding at Villeneuve-Saint-Georges a good five hours, and I was getting hungry and especially thirsty, as well as worried. It began to grow dark. Another train pulled into the railroad yards. It had two cattle cars and some freight cars loaded with the wreckage of airplanes and bombed trucks. The two cattle cars were jammed with children, and I could see their frightened, weary little faces through the slats. They weren't noisy children, which made the scene all the more melancholy. I could see by some of their faces that they were Jewish. On the door of their cattle car was a lead seal.

My German guard got out to walk up and down along with the two guards of the children's train. I lowered the window and shouted, "Wasser!" The guard merely shook his head and continued his walk. Finally, he stopped at my window, looked around to see if the other guards were watching, and passed his canteen to me. When the children in the train opposite saw this, they began screaming, "*De l'eau! De l'eau!*" I gave the guard back his canteen and, pointing toward the children, said, "*Kinder, Kinder.*" "*Nein, Juden,*" he replied. The children continued to beg for water whenever they saw one of their guards pass by. They were restless and desperate. One little boy kept reaching down and touching a guard's shoulder as he walked by.

Another child pulled back this boy's hand. The German guard took his knife out of his holster and shook it in the faces of the children. Some of the boys were urinating through the slats, and one of them accidentally wet this German guard. He turned in fury and struck at the child's hand with his knife, cutting off a piece of the thumb, which fell at his feet. A frightful scream came from inside the cattle car filled with children. The German kicked the piece of the child's thumb and ground it into the gravel with his foot. The four French political prisoners in the compartment next to mine screamed curses at the Boches. I sank down on the wooden bench inside my car, and I heard one of the Frenchmen next door say, "God has forsaken us!"

Until about eleven at night our train remained on the track opposite this misery train. Then we moved slowly until we reached the Gare de Lyon. Here there was a wait of another two hours until someone came for me. I finally dozed in a corner of the compartment, for by this time I was numb with hunger, fatigue, and worry. A German officer arrived and took me in an automobile to a building in the Faubourg St. Honoré almost opposite the former British Embassy. There my escort woke up a German woman who was dozing at a desk in an office and told her to make me comfortable until morning. The German woman at my request took me to the bathroom and found a pitcher to give me some drinking water. She also offered me dry biscuits and coffee from her thermos bottle. She looked at my rough hands, and I explained that I was cultivating the

land. She remarked that women in Germany too were doing that these days. I stretched out on a sofa, but could not sleep, for I started to worry all over again about what would face me in the morning. A pimply-faced young soldier replaced the woman at about seven in the morning, and he brought me a cup of steaming liquid that resembled coffee and a piece of cake filled with caraway seeds.

At about nine-thirty a brusque, efficient-looking little man came in and asked me to follow him. We went into an elegant room done in a dull blue. The building had formerly been the Roger & Gallet perfume company's offices. I had tried to primp up as best I could with a little powder and some lipstick. A severe-looking man sat at a big desk. He asked me to sit down and examined my *carte d'identité*. Then, looking through my dossier, he asked why I had not made a declaration of my property. I told him I had done so at Fontainebleau.

"It is said that you have a lot of jewelry," he said.

"The only piece of jewelry I have is my watch," I answered. He agreed to my suggestion that he telephone to Fontainebleau and check up on the declaration of my property on file there. There were four or five items on the paper in front of him, which he did not let me see, and as he listened over the phone he checked off each one systematically. I had no idea what he was saying or learning. Then I was sent into another office, where they left me for about two hours. I was hungry, tired, angry, and nervous. The German official sent for me again, said that he regretted very much but there had been an error, and told

me I was free to go. I asked sharply whether M. Hutterman, of the Gestapo, knew about this useless interrogation, and he said, "I have just been talking with M. Hutterman on the telephone, and I am assured that a mistake has been made in your case."

I walked out very much relieved that nothing had been discovered of my part in the bribery of Bobbie or in hiding Frenchmen escaping the forced-labor draft. When I visited this building in the Faubourg St. Honoré after the liberation of Paris, a secretary to the American Psychological Warfare group asked me if I would like to look through the rooms. There was one room in red, decorated with cupids, which the Nazis had used as a marriage bureau, and near by was a room done in blue, black, and green. There was a dais in this room where the Nazis had conducted inquiries, and there was also a row of narrow cupboards where victims were trussed up; opposite them was a well-made bed, an invitation to worn-out prisoners to rest after they had revealed their secrets or confessed their guilt.

After this trip to Paris under the auspices of the Gestapo, I kept quiet in the country for a few weeks and was careful about the people I saw and the letters I wrote. In September I went into Paris again and called on my friend Dr. Lamour.

"We have British and American boys in apartments around Paris," Dr. Lamour told me, "and we are desperate for food and clothing and places to keep them. You can be of great help taking care of these aviators because of your contacts with farms near Barbizon. It may be dan-

gerous for you in your situation, but it is certainly worth while."

I assured him that I would like to do this work and made arrangements with him to meet some of the aviators. A few days later I went into Paris again, and Annie Lamour took me to meet a Dr. Rival, who was to bring me to the apartment of one of the Frenchwomen who was harboring American aviators. Dr. Rival was another dentist who had been busy getting donations to keep going this work of caring for fallen fliers. He and his wife had supplied beds and furniture for the aviators and would have liked to put some of them up in their own apartment, but they had an old father who was somewhat feeble-minded and might talk. Both Dr. Rival and Dr. Lamour had little more than the clothes on their backs left for themselves, because they had given everything else to clothe the fallen crews. They were very excited, as I was, about this first meeting between an American in Paris and these boys from home.

Early that morning Dr. Rival took me to a house in the Avenue d'Orléans. We went up to the first floor, and Rival knocked quietly on the door, making the V signal with his knuckles. A motherly-looking woman in a peignoir came to the door. She looked questioningly at Dr. Rival when she saw me, and he whispered to her, "She's an American." The woman took my hand and kissed me. The Rivals had told her about me, and she said, "You must be Drue," as she led us into her small living room. Her name was Mme. Heraux. On the table in her living room was a citation from the President of the United States and a medal and citation

from the Red Cross, which her husband, who had been killed in the last war, had been awarded. Rival explained that I had come to see the Americans.

"There's one in the kitchen," Mme. Heraux said. "He's having breakfast. I won't say anything to him. You just tip-toe in and take him by surprise."

I opened the kitchen door. A young boy was sitting at a table, his back to me. I tiptoed up to him, put my hands in front of his eyes, and said, "Guess who?"

The boy jumped up, pulled down my hands, and stared at me. I started to cry. "Christ, are you an American?" he said.

"Just as American as you," I answered. Then we hugged each other, and he started to cry. Mme. Heraux and Dr. Rival, standing in the doorway, were also quietly weeping.

"What's your name?" I asked.

"Bob Giles," he said. "What's yours?"

"It's Drue and a French name you probably won't be able to get straight, so just say Drue."

"Jesus," he said, "it just can't be true, an American!" Then he added, "I've got two buddies in this town, and I want them to see you, too. I can't speak French. Would you ask Mme. Heraux to get Carroll and Tom over here? They're living somewhere around this neighborhood." Then he looked me over again and said, "Gee, if I'd known you were coming, I would have shaved this morning. These damned French blades tear your hide off, and I don't shave any more than I have to."

I asked Mme. Heraux to fetch Carroll and Tom. She

dressed quickly and went for them. "Tell her not to tell them why they're coming, I want them to get the surprise I got," Bob said.

Bob Giles was twenty-one, a short, dark boy from Detroit. He and Carroll and Tom had been shot down somewhere south of Paris. Now he was dressed in a red turtle-neck sweater and an old pair of pants that had belonged to Dr. Rival. We sat grinning at each other, holding hands, while Dr. Rival rocked back and forth in his chair with a delighted expression on his face.

Mme. Heraux came back shortly and said the other two boys would be there in a few minutes. The women who were taking care of them had to get dressed. The first to arrive was Carroll Harrup. He was wearing a beret and a tight little coat that made him look very French. I was sitting in a dark corner of the little room, and he didn't see me when he first came in.

"Hi, Bob," he said, "I hear we're going to spend the day together."

Suddenly he saw me, quickly pulled off his beret, and looked embarrassed.

"I'd like you to meet a friend of mine," Bob said in a superior way. The boy struggled for a word of French and finally came out with, "Bonjour." I got up, put my arms around him, and said, "Hello, darling."

"What's this?" he asked. "Is it real?"

"Christ, yes, she's American!" Bob Giles said.

Carroll Harrup looked at Bob and said, "It's just too much, I don't know what to say," and there were tears in

his eyes. Mme. Olga Christol, the Frenchwoman in whose apartment he was staying, looked on and beamed at us. Then Mme. Christol went out to get Tom Mezynski, a boy of Polish parentage, who came from near Pittsburgh. Carroll Harrup was a tall, blond boy from Iowa, where his father ran a grocery store. Tom came in in a few minutes, and Bob Giles explained me to him. He had the same incredulous reaction as Carroll Harrup. Since they had fallen in France they had been constantly among people whose language they could not understand, but whose kindness and courage they appreciated.

Dr. Rival went back to his office, maintaining he had not had such a pleasant morning in many years. Mme. Olga and Mme. Heraux decided to leave me alone with my compatriots. I began to ask them a lot of questions, and they asked me as many.

The three boys had made a crash landing, and all ten of the crew of their plane were unhurt when it came down on its belly in a field. The boys had put gasoline on the plane and had arranged with a farmer to touch it off as soon as they had got as far away from it as possible. Then they had divided up, and these three had come away together. After making about five kilometers through woods, they saw the black smoke of their plane in the distance. They began to get hungry, and at night they crawled out of the woods where they had been hiding, to dig up some potatoes and carrots in fields where they had seen peasants digging them up during the day. They ate them raw. This kind of existence went on for two days. They still had their



uniforms on, and they did not dare approach anyone. None of them could speak French. Their object was to get to the nearest railroad, and they listened carefully for engine whistles, but heard none. The third night was very cold, and they decided to roast some of their potatoes. The wood was wet, but they got some hay from near-by haystacks, used five-dollar bills for kindling, and got a good fire going. These roasted potatoes were their first hot food in three days, but they were not enough to counteract the effect of the raw vegetables they had been eating, and Carroll Har-rup started getting stomach pains. He had had serious ulcers, which he had managed to hide from Army doctors when he entered the Air Corps.

Finally, the boys decided that they could not continue this way any longer. They approached a farmhouse, where they terrified a woman and her daughter with the sight of their American uniforms. They managed to indicate by signs that they were hungry, and the woman made them a soup. She went out into the garden and pulled up what they thought was a bunch of weeds. It turned out to be a bunch of leeks, and mixed with some potatoes it made what they called the best damned soup they had ever eaten. The farm woman gave each of the boys a pair of ragged old pants, old shirts and sweaters, and told them to go as far away as possible. They made the noise "chou-chou," and the farm woman pointed out the general direction of the railroad.

After the boys had walked a long while, they came to a railroad station. They went up to the ticket office and stood

looking at the ticket agent without daring to open their mouths. Bob finally whispered to him, "American." The man opened the door to his ticket office, pulled them in after him, and shoved them into a back room. Bob pointed on the map to the direction of Spain. They were only about a hundred kilometers south of Paris but had no idea where they were. The ticket agent went for a man who could speak a little English. Meanwhile, he gave the boys his own lunch of a hard-boiled egg and a bottle of cider. The man, who could speak English, arranged with them to follow him into the train when it arrived and he would tell them where to get off, at a near-by junction. By this time Carroll was getting attacks of dysentery about every ten minutes.

On the train Carroll felt so ill after about two hours that he thought he was going to die. He wanted to slide off the train and begged the other two to go on without him, but they wouldn't leave him. As the train pulled into a station they saw a trainload of German soldiers pulling in on the next track. This was their first sight of the German uniform. The three of them slid out on the other side of the train from the cars full of Germans and got into the town by a roundabout route, avoiding the station.

It was pitch-dark now, and they wandered in the unknown town, bewildered and helpless. They were looking particularly for a doctor for Carroll. The grim iron shutters on the French shops were closed tight for the night. Finally, they came to a building where the shutter was not quite closed, and they saw a cobbler at work at his bench. They went into his shop and said, "American, American."

The cobbler got into a panic and motioned them to go away, but at that point Carroll keeled over and fainted. The cobbler called his wife and told her to go for a doctor. When he was revived, Carroll kept moaning and begging Bob and Tom to go on without him and not run the risk of getting caught because he was slowing them up.

A few minutes later the cobbler's wife returned with a doctor. He took a look at Carroll and told the cobbler to help bring the boys to his house. The two Frenchmen half carried Carroll, and the other two boys followed. The doctor could speak English. He gave Carroll treatment and kept the boys in his home for twelve days. He told them that he was glad to have them because his own son had been shot by the Nazis as a hostage ten days before. "This may save my wife's reason," the doctor said.

Their host, like so many fine French doctors and dentists, had contacts in the resistance movement, and he made the contact that finally got them to Paris. A resistance man took them in Paris to the apartment of a girl who kept a confectionery shop. She was living with a man to whom she wasn't married, who used to stay in the apartment, and she explained to the boys, who remained with her for three weeks, that it was quite customary to live with the man you loved. They told me that they were rather shocked, but one of them added, "Maybe it isn't such a bad idea, after all, I don't know." The resistance people distributed them to three homes in the Denfert-Rochereau quarter because the confectioner was afraid that her place was being watched.

In answer to their questions, I told the boys that I was in France because I was married to a Frenchman, that I worked on the land, and that I would see to it that they got food and clothing. I asked them their impression of when the eagerly awaited invasion of France was coming. They were skeptical about any action before the leaves of autumn fell, but they said that great preparations were going on in England.

We parted reluctantly for the day, and I promised to visit them again at the earliest possible moment. When I left Mme. Heraux' apartment late that afternoon, I felt completely exhilarated and much less lonely. I realized that from now on I would have people to see and talk with from my own country in the midst of occupation by the Nazis. Before I left, Mme. Heraux had asked me to find other people, if possible, who could hide aviators safely in their apartments. The number of boys falling was increasing every day, and the resistance organization that took charge of them was desperate for quarters, food, and clothing. I went to see my husband's aunt, Maria Errazurez, and asked if she could take in aviators, but she thought it too risky for them and for the Jewish children she was hiding from the Nazis. She was sure that some day the Germans would get on to her activities, and that any further risk at this time was unwise. She told me at this visit that Philip Keun, my husband's brother-in-law, was in France again. He wanted to see me but thought it too dangerous for both of us. He had sent his love and told her to tell me that if I should ever see him in Paris in a German uniform, I must give no

sign of recognition. He was one of the group of saboteurs dropped into France from England.

Later that day I went to see my friends the Devignes. Robert Devigne, through his connections as a textile manufacturer, got me some three meter lengths of cloth which I could barter in the neighborhood of Barbizon for food for the aviators.

Next day I went back to Mme. Heraux' to call on Bob Giles and to Mme. Olga's to call on Carroll Harrup. Each of these apartments consisted of two small rooms. These women who worked so hard for the boys had very little money; Mme. Heraux worked afternoons and evenings, taking tickets at a cinema, and all the others had to go out to work during the day. They did the washing and cooking for their clandestine guests as well as their own housework. None of them ever received a franc for their resistance work until the end of 1943, when money arrived from England. Then they were paid 100 francs a head for the boys' keep. To live in France at this time took about 800 francs a day. The aviators slept on cots, sofas, and whatever else was available in these crowded, dingy rooms, and the occupants had to climb over one another to get in and out.

While I was visiting with Carroll Harrup at Mme. Olga's, a Messerschmitt flew overhead. Carroll shook his fist at the German plane, pointed at himself, and said, "Wouldn't you be mad if you only knew there was a little 'terror bomber' down here!"

That evening I went back to spend the night at the La-

mours' apartment. Annie and I had just come in, when the air-raid sirens sounded. It was about five in the afternoon, and we stood on the balcony of the Lamour apartment and watched a terrifying air battle going on over our heads. Flying Fortresses were bombing the tire factories at Courbevoie and Suresnes. We saw the bombs slowly drop from the bellies of the planes and moments later black smoke rose from the ground. Puffs from antiaircraft guns filled the sky, for Paris at this time was one of the best defended cities on the Continent. Annie and I clung to each other as we watched eleven Flying Fortresses come down in flames, with boys like Bob, Carroll, and Tom jumping from them in burning parachutes with no chance for escape. Though the flak was falling all around, Parisians were out in the streets watching the excruciating sight, and no one seemed to have concern for anything but the lives of the boys who were being shot down. The whole scene could not have lasted more than minutes, but it seemed long, and afterwards black smoke rose from the tire factories in the west and the air was filled with the smell of burning paint and rubber. We listened to the nine o'clock broadcast from London that night, and the announcer's voice seemed altogether too cool and impersonal for us as he said, "American heavy bombers attacked targets in Paris today. Sixteen bombers are missing."

That night I had a long talk with Robert and Annie Lamour about the work of providing food, clothing, cigarettes, reading matter, and comforts for these boys who were in hiding in Paris, awaiting their turns to go out of France on

the underground. We all agreed that no other resistance work was more valuable for us to do, and Robert insisted that I must call on him for money whenever I needed any, for he was carrying on a profitable practice in dentistry and devoting most of the proceeds to resistance work. I told them that I could get mutton every week from the Pouteau farm and honey regularly from the Landras family at Perthes, near Barbizon, which specialized in bee culture. Mme. Landras' father had been in resistance to the Germans during the war of 1870, when he smuggled patriots out in wine barrels under the noses of the Nazis of that day. Mme. Landras kept an American flag in a bureau drawer for the day of liberation. The Lamours and I also discussed the possibility of enlisting people in Paris and in the neighborhood of Barbizon in this work. I began to get a feeling of real usefulness for the first time since the occupation by the Nazis. I also had a great maternal feeling for these youngsters who needed help so badly. I had a son in California by my first marriage, and I quickly came to feel that these boys were also my own.

Back in Barbizon, I told Nadine about the aviators and my intention of devoting most of my time to helping take care of them. She warned me to be cautious and said that a Spanish couple who lived two doors from us had just been arrested by the Gestapo, even though the man had been in Franco's diplomatic corps both in Berlin and Paris. The Gestapo had taken him as well as his pregnant wife to the Santé Prison, and the search of their place had been carried to the extent of slashing the upholstery in the

chairs and digging up the garden to a depth of four feet in a hunt for documents.

Soon after I got back to Barbizon I made a deal with Bellanger, a farmer at Achères, to give me grain for the cloth Robert Devigne had given me, and I arranged with the garageman, Robilliard, to pick up 700 kilos of grain for me in his truck, which saved me my arduous bicycle trips to Achères. I also took some of the English clothes my husband had worn to an auctioneer in Fontainebleau, who in return for them gave me eleven pairs of pants, three coats, and some shoes. I explained to him that I had many friends in Paris who needed clothing badly, and he was very sympathetic.

During the following week I took three big baskets of food and a large suitcase full of clothes into Paris. Sarah Watson sent Charles, the man who did the heavy work at the Foyer International, to meet me at the bus stop in Paris, and Nadine helped me load them onto the bus in Barbizon. We stored mutton in the large icebox at the Foyer International, and Charles delivered pieces of meat to Mme. Olga, Mme. Heraux, and the other Frenchwomen who were harboring aviators. Charles himself had escaped from imprisonment in Germany. I arranged with a friend who had a large library to bring books for the boys every few days, and we ran a small circulating library for them. Other friends in Paris helped me with clothing, and Sarah Watson, who had extra ration tickets because she was feeding about 1400 students a day, supplied some food.

On my way back to Barbizon again next day, I suddenly



looked up in the *métro* train and saw my brother-in-law, Philip Keun, in the uniform of a German officer. He stared at me, but we made no signs of recognition. I got off the subway train at the next stop and sat down on a bench in order to collect myself. Philip, who had spent his early life in central Europe, had stayed at our apartment with Jacques and me often in the year before war broke out. I had had another shock while riding in the *métro* some time before this meeting. On the station platforms I saw large posters advertising *La Piste du Nord*, with Jacques Terrane, my husband's stage name, and Michele Morgan. Under the picture of my husband on these posters patriots had written the V sign. The Nazis banned *La Piste du Nord* later when Michele Morgan became an American citizen.

Before long Bob Giles, Carroll Harrup, and Tom Mezynski started out of France on their tough trip under the guidance of the underground. We who worked at the job of taking care of the boys in Paris were never told any details of these journeys, but occasionally we heard stories of boys whose lives had been lost crossing mountain gorges and deep canyons, and sometimes we heard that some of them had been captured.

After the first batch of three Americans, I next came into contact with five Polish aviators, who had escaped from a prison camp in Germany and were in hiding at Mme. Olga's and Mme. Heraux' for three weeks. At Mme. Olga's one day I also met a heavy-set, elderly Englishman named Herring. He had been a sports writer in Paris before the war, was married to a Frenchwoman, and had become a natu-

ralized French citizen. He collected the names and addresses of British and American aviators, which were broadcast every day over clandestine radios to England, so that their families might be informed that they were still alive. Herring had started out testing the authenticity of the RAF boys by asking them the name of their tailor, but he quickly discovered that most of these boys had not had their clothes made to order before the war, and he began to ask them instead, "What does Mrs. Mopps generally say?" Mrs. Mopps was the charwoman in a popular English radio program. The RAF boys promptly answered: "Can I do yer now, sir?" the opening line of the sketch. We were always fearful that the Nazis had planted agents *provocateurs* among our aviators, and I heard of two boys who had pretended to come from Waterbury, Connecticut, who, after the underground went to work on them when they seemed suspicious, confessed that they came from Nazi Germany. They were quickly shot in a field. After a short conversation with the American boys I could usually tell what part of the United States they came from.

The experiences of the aviators I began to meet at these Paris apartments varied from the sublime to the ridiculous. Two former Scotland Yard men, Harry Yarwood and Stephen Bulmer, turned up at Mme. Olga's. They were to be dropped by the RAF for sabotage work when the plane was shot down near Dijon before completing its mission. A Frenchman had hidden them in a cheese factory, where they were well fed, but thereafter they could not stand the smell of cheese. Two other men, Irving Schwayder, of

Denver, Colorado, and John Gilson, of Binghamton, New York, were shot down near Quimper in a Flying Fortress raid on Cognac. A peasant girl, about seven years old, saw them falling in their parachutes. She ran out to meet them, and after they had thrown their parachutes into a gully, the child hid them under the hay on her father's farm. When German patrols arrived soon afterwards to inquire whether any parachutists had been seen, the little French girl, who was whistling innocently and playing a skipping game, denied seeing anyone. As soon as the Germans left, the child pulled the fliers out of the hay and took them home with her, where this peasant family clothed them and fed them until someone arrived who could get them on the underground.

The work for this growing family of aviators rapidly became both arduous and routine. Whenever Mme. Olga or Mme. Heraux needed food for their aviators, they would drop me a note saying that they had to have darning cotton for the socks, or with some equally innocent-sounding request. When a new batch of boys arrived at her house, Mme. Olga would write, "I have had two nieces come up from the Loire, and Marie is very anxious to see you." She rang the changes on these devices and was careful to keep the telephone number of Robilliard's garage, where she could reach me in case of emergency, on the underside of her ironing board.

When they went out on the underground convoys, the boys had to have at least three days' rations. As it was now winter, my farm work was less strenuous, and Nadine and I were kept busy making gingerbread with molasses from

sugar beets, patés made of rabbit meat and whatever else we could get. I also supplied the aviators' hostesses in Paris with eggs for hard-boiled eggs. In December my pig Juliette was fat enough to kill, and we smoked the hams and salted the rest of the meat. As gas was now limited in Paris to a very small quantity every day, barely enough to cook ordinary meals, Nadine and I did a lot of cooking of the food on our kitchen stove in Barbizon, for I now had plenty of wood stored away. Marion Greenough faithfully knitted sweaters for the boys from yarn she unraveled from old garments.

At least once a week I went into Paris with two heavy market baskets filled to the brim with food. It was not always possible to get a bus from Barbizon to Paris, and most of the time I had to take the bus to Melun and then the early-morning commuters' train into Paris. Each of my baskets held about fifty pounds of food. Nadine and I wheeled them in my wheelbarrow to the corner of the street, where the bus to Melun stopped at six-twenty-five in the morning. It was still dark at this time of the year, and the cold was bitter. Both Nadine and I got chilblains from exposure that winter and from the deficiencies in our diet. Almost everybody in the neighborhood was afflicted with these aching chilblains, which soon developed into itching sores.

At the Melun station I had to get my baskets into whatever room there was in the crowded compartments and corridors, and sometimes stood astraddle of them so that the other passengers would not crush the contents as they walked by. During that fierce and tense winter of 1943

many of the passengers on these trains were reading *Autant porte le vent* (*Gone With the Wind*). Many of them had tears in their eyes as they read of the hardships during another war, and Margaret Mitchell's story made their own sufferings more poignant to them. The people on these trains were now looking very shabby, and since there was a great shortage of soap, the smells in the train were almost overpowering. It was chic to be shabby in France at this time, for only collaborators could afford to dress well.

Because of the weight of my baskets I stayed in the train until the rush of commuters was over. There were inspectors at the exit gates of the Gare de Lyon who looked into luggage for black-market food. On one of my first trips a Frenchwoman, who was also carrying a basket, murmured, "Follow me." The woman went through the station buffet instead of the ordinary exit gates, and I went after her as fast as my load permitted. We sat down at a café table and over the weak Bovril, which was one of the few hot drinks obtainable, the woman explained to me that the inspectors usually disappeared about fifteen minutes after the train pulled in. The buffet in the Gare de Lyon had been put out of bounds for German troops because the railroad resistance workers were both hostile and active, and the Germans feared incidents. Thereafter I always went to the buffet from the train, and the second time I stopped there, a florid-faced waiter, detecting my accent, offered me cigarettes at 150 francs a package because I was an American. The black-market price was as high as 250 francs a package in some places, and thereafter I bought

my cigarettes for the aviators regularly from the waiter in the Gare de Lyon. The black market was the patriotic market at this time, because anything kept from the Nazis at whatever cost was patriotic. Everyone patronized the black market, and there was a camaraderie among smugglers. I won the good will of the *vestiaire* attendant at the ladies' room in the Gare de Lyon by bringing her two eggs for her daughter's young child on each of my trips, and I once gave her five kilos of potatoes. She permitted me to leave my bundles with her until Charles had time to fetch them to the Foyer International. The attendant also let me out of the station by the side door which led directly into the *métro* and at which there were no inspectors.

Charles worked hard for us, and I took him once to meet some of the aviators. He grabbed them, kissed them on both cheeks, and called them, "*Mes amis.*" He kept looking at them and saying to me, "*Si jeune, si jeune,*" and his eyes filled with tears. Charles was about forty-five years old. He was very thin and tall and usually was not as well dressed as the boys were in their secondhand clothes. Once I offered him a good sweater and a fair pair of pants, but he refused, saying, "They need them more than I do." Charles also found a place to get cigarettes for the boys cheaper than I could get them. The risks he ran were very great, for spies were found in the Foyer at this time, and one of the students had been taken by the Germans after a fellow student had denounced him. Mme. Olga had caused a domestic crisis in Charles' household by writing him a note to his home in her code, telling him that she needed darning cotton for

his socks, and sending her *amitiés* and hoping to see him à *bientôt*. Charles had not dared to take his wife into his confidence, for fear that the work he was doing for us would worry her, and she could not be expected to realize when she opened the note that this was simply a request for some of the meat which we kept in Sarah Watson's big refrigerator. Thereafter we arranged for Mme. Olga to write Charles only at the Foyer International. Meanwhile, he managed to make his wife believe that the note was from one of the women at the Foyer and concerned some black-market wool he had promised her.

Mme. Olga told me one day that both she and Geneviève, the young girl who came for the fliers to take them on the first stage of their escape, and who brought fliers to the hideouts, worried a lot about me and feared that if the Germans ever caught me they would torture me and undoubtedly shoot me. Along with the other people who worked in active resistance I had cyanide-of-potassium pills sewn into my clothing in the event of such an emergency. "What about you and Geneviève?" I asked Mme Olga. "They'd certainly kill you too."

"But I'm a Frenchwoman," she answered, "and these boys are fighting for our liberation." I told her I felt the same way about the situation. I was never permitted to meet Geneviève until after liberation, and I only caught a glimpse of her once in the distance. She looked to be about twenty years old and was stocky and blonde. It was always considered safer that only those people who had to know one another for the work should meet.

Another part of the work was keeping the boys amused and giving them exercise. I brought the friends I knew I could trust around to the apartments to visit the boys. "Dolores," the beautiful musical comedy star of another generation, now married to Tudor Wilkinson and living in the Quai d'Orléans, called on the RAF fliers with me, for she had been born in England. Elsa Blanchard, the sculptress, and Sylvia Beach, the bookshop proprietor and publisher, also visited the boys with me and helped to keep them from getting too bored. One felt very sorry for them, cooped up in these small, dark rooms for weeks at a time, unable to speak the language of their hosts and with very little means to pass the long days and nights.

I often took the boys for walks around Paris, disguised in their old French clothes. Sometimes we had to dye their hair to make them look less English or American, especially when it was conspicuously red. It was dangerous to take them into the *métro*, for the Germans were on the lookout there for both escaped aviators and Frenchmen evading the forced draft. Occasionally we went to the movies, but the Nazis took to turning on the lights in the cinemas in the middle of a performance and hunting for forced-labor draft dodgers. One of the boys asked to see the damage he had helped inflict on the Renault automobile works. Mme. Olga took him to visit the wreckage, and he looked it over with satisfaction while he carried on his arm a basketful of empty wine bottles for camouflage. It was about this time that the Germans shot down the crew of an American Flying Fortress who had frivolously marked "Murder Inc." on the



backs of their flying suits. The Nazis paraded them through the streets of Paris and made a propaganda show in an effort to antagonize the French against the American raids which were increasing in tempo. Some Frenchmen swallowed the bait, for they could not be expected to remember the Brooklyn gang the boys were parodying.

Mme. Olga Christol's husband and I would also take the boys to a barber in the Denfert-Rochereau quarter to have their hair cut. The barber, I am sure, realized that he was serving special customers, but he never asked a question. However, we took no chances and did not permit the boys to talk. We told one of them to pretend that he had a sore throat, and M. Christol interpreted for him. Another boy read a newspaper while M. Christol kept up a running conversation with the barber.

The Christols were plain Parisians. He was a short, gray-haired man about fifty, and she a small, kindly woman of about the same age. M. Christol worked as a clerk in a government office and always looked neat. He and his wife had once owned a little notion store, but they sold it after the German occupation. Their son, who had been in the French Army, escaped to North Africa after the fall of France and was serving with General Leclercq's army at the time his parents were hiding aviators. Sometimes when there were more fliers than beds in his home, M. Christol slept sitting in a chair, and occasionally both he and his wife went to friends' houses to spend the night so that the boys could have their bed. Their concierge, like all concierges, was curious about them, and they had to be care-

ful that she got no idea of what was going on in their apartment. Fortunately, the concierge of their building lived in the back and never saw us coming and going. Once, however, one of my well-meaning friends left a batch of mystery stories in English for the boys with the concierge when Mme. Olga was out. Mme. Olga managed to explain that the books were for a friend who was studying English. On another occasion the Germans searched the house in which the Christols lived for black-market operators, but fortunately did not enter the Christol apartment.

I rounded up all the French-English dictionaries and grammars I could find for the boys, so that they could learn as much of the language as would be valuable to them for their outward journey. I also got a map of Europe for each of the apartments and some string and pins, so that the boys could pass the time following the progress of the war fronts, with the help of the radio and the news their visitors brought them. M. Christol taught them to play *belote*, and they taught him poker and gin rummy.

One day when I arrived at Mme. Christol's apartment I found her in tears. She had an American flier staying there at the time who had become quite a problem child. He treated Mme. Olga as if she were born to serve him and resented the fact that she expected him to help with washing the dishes. He was a lieutenant and used his rank over the sergeant who had fallen with him and was suffering from a bad concussion. He made the sergeant do all the dishes and even asked him to polish his shoes. He never said good morning to his host and hostess, and when M. Christol

brought in cigarettes never bothered to thank him or to offer him one. He would come into the kitchen in the morning and ask surlily if his breakfast was ready. This was the first case like this Mme. Olga had encountered, and the lieutenant made her so nervous and upset that she told me she did not think she could keep him much longer. She was reluctant to have me talk to him about it, however, because she said he was so young and seemed to know no better. So were all of them young. I walked into the lieutenant's room, where he and the sergeant slept, and told him to get dressed, that I had to talk to him.

"You are behaving like a little son of a bitch," I told him, "and I want you to understand a few things. This woman and her husband are risking their lives every minute of the day and night for you. I'm riding miles and miles on a bicycle, scrounging for food for you and lugging it here. I think we're being good soldiers, and I think you might have the decency to be one, too."

"I know you're bringing food, Drue," he said, "but we don't see any of it. I've seen you bring in lots of eggs, but we get an egg once in a blue moon. This woman's getting paid for us, and she won't even let me use the electricity at night to read."

"You do your reading during the day," I told him. "And what you don't realize is that Mme. Olga has already been fined 2000 francs, which I had to get for her, because she was using too much electricity. What she gets for keeping you doesn't amount to a hill of beans. She gets a hundred francs a head and that doesn't nearly pay the cost of light,

heat, rent, and other expenses, to say nothing of the time she spends cooking, washing, ironing, and taking care of you. Every egg I bring to her is precious. She has to keep them for your trip out.

"You'd better begin to get wised up," I added, "or I'll turn you loose in the streets and you can shift for yourself. You're living in an occupied country, you know, and these people are having a hell of a time. It might do you some good to be put in a German concentration camp."

As I kept bawling him out, the boy began to shake.

"What are you shaking about?" I asked.

"Because you're scolding me," he said, "and I know I'm a bastard."

"Then maybe it's done you some good," and I went over and put my arm around him. "I know it's hard being cooped up like this, and I can appreciate what you've gone through. You've got a right to be nervy, but so have we, you know." We never had any further trouble from the lieutenant.

Two other American boys gave us quite a scare and endangered the lives of all of us by their thoughtlessness. The organization had put two tough boys from New Jersey, one a tail gunner and the other a radio operator, with the Marchand family in the Rue Monge. The family had never put up fliers before. They had two small children, and resistance leaders avoided putting fliers in homes where there were children because if they were caught, the entire family was likely to be wiped out by the Nazis, and there was always some risk that children might be indiscreet. But

there was a shortage of places at this time, and M. Marchand worked in the Halle aux Vins, which was an advantage, for he was able to help with the food problem by trading wine for provisions.

The two boys, who were twenty-two years old, had been shot down on their ninth mission over the Continent, and, like most of the boys who fell, were resentful of their bad luck. They had been used to drinking, and while the Marchands supplied them with plenty of wine, this did not seem to satisfy them; when temptation came along they yielded quickly. The Rue Monge is in a poor quarter near the Gobelins, and it was filled with anti-Nazi Frenchmen. Leo, the proprietor of the café downstairs, was an ardent de Gaullist, and the baker near by was a strong patriot. The Marchands had brought these men to the apartment to see the boys and play cards with them, and though the Americans spoke no French and the Frenchmen no English, they managed to become fast friends.

Early one morning I arrived at the Marchand apartment with some fresh eggs and milk for the boys, and when I got in, I found Mme. Marchand very worried. She told me that she and her husband had gone out to dinner the night before, leaving supper for the boys and telling them to admit no one to the apartment. Leo, the café man, came up during the evening, knocked on the door with the V signal, and called out his name. He had already had a few drinks and was feeling friendly. The boys opened the door, though their strict orders were never to open the door to anyone, V signal or not. Leo invited them downstairs to the café,

explaining that he had locked out patrons for the rest of the night and had just a few friends there. The boys went down, and Leo and his friends treated them royally on champagne and brandy.

When the Marchand family and their children returned, they found the apartment empty, and not even a note. They were so worried that they did not permit their children to undress and thought of abandoning their home, for fear the Gestapo had arrived while they were out and taken the boys. While they were discussing their next move, Leo came noisily up the uncarpeted stairs with an American flier, drunk, on each arm. When I arrived, the boys were sleeping off their heavy hangover.

These two "dead-end" kids swore continually, but I think I managed to outswear them that morning. I tried to impress on them what anguish they had caused the Marchands and the fact that if they had been caught the entire family, including the children, would have been killed.

"Well, if you don't like it, why don't you get rid of us?" one of them suggested. "It's just a racket with you people. You're getting paid for it, aren't you?"

I was so mad that I began to cry. Then they got worried, realized the seriousness of what they had done, and tried to apologize. I brought in Mme. Marchand, a florid, fat motherly woman, and explained that they wanted to apologize to her. We decided, however, that too many people now knew they were in this apartment, and I got in touch with one of the Frenchmen who helped take avia-

tors out of France, and the two boys were moved next afternoon to a quarter where their publicity would not follow them.

Most of the RAF boys and the American boys who were in hiding in these apartments in Paris were thoroughly considerate and deeply appreciative of what was being done for them at such great risk by poor French families. Of the 196 fliers which our organization managed to hide, these are the only cases that came to my knowledge which were difficult.

In December, 1943, all France was roused to fury by the speech of General Jan Smuts in which he told the United Kingdom Branch of the Empire Parliamentary Association that after the war France, Italy, and Germany would disappear as great powers and that Britain must protect her position as a first-class power. The reaction to the Smuts statement in Paris and even in my neighborhood in Barbizon was immediate and universal, except for the collaborators. Some Frenchmen called him a Boche, and maintained that a Boer was no better than a German, after all. Mme. Heraux was so disturbed by Smuts' statement that she said to me, "If they sent an RAF boy to me today, I could not bring myself to take him in!" A great wave of anti-British sentiment swept the people, and I asked all the fliers I visited to tell the intelligence officers who questioned them after they got out of France what a bad impression Smuts had made, and to ask, "Who the hell is this man Smuts, anyway?" I know that they carried out my message, for

after liberation both British and American intelligence officers who questioned me said, with smiles, "I take it you don't like Smuts?"

Later in December Helen Kirkpatrick, correspondent of the *Chicago Daily News*, did much to improve the situation. She delivered a broadcast from London over the BBC facilities denying Smuts' statements, told the people of France that there could be no question of the importance of France's regaining her position as a world power, and paid warm tribute to the French forces fighting alongside British and American troops in Africa and Italy. All my friends were delighted at this sympathetic statement.

During December we kept getting new consignments of fliers. Nadine had to take food into Paris for a while because I got abscesses in my ears. Mme. Luce Cohn, who was an expert nurse, took care of me, and my relations with this lovely family improved continually and were one of the great comforts of my life in Barbizon. Mme. Cohn invited me to dinner on Christmas Eve, and in front of my plate was a gift wrapped in tissue paper, which turned out to be a cake of precious prewar soap. I had brought as my gift for Mme. Cohn a pack of unused playing cards from America which I had found in an old trunk. The table was beautifully laid, with holly berries in the center. I noticed that there were three places at table.

"Luce, who's coming?" I asked.

She sat me down in front of the log fire on a stool, took my hand, and told me that as she trusted and loved me, the time had come to confide her greatest secret.



"The third place is for my husband," she said. "He has been living in the house all the time. Now you can realize what we have been through in the last three years. At every knock on the door we had to hide his plate, and he had to run upstairs again. I have been washing out his things every day so there would be no accumulated laundry that might give us away. Jacques knows you very well, though you have never seen him, and he talks of you as if you had been friends for years."

The Cohn house had two stories and an attic, and there were a studio and bedroom detached from the house which were occupied on week ends by a friend of theirs from Paris, a nurse. From the studio there was an exit into a courtyard. Wood was always kept piled against the garden wall so that at any time Jacques Cohn could climb over and get into the neighbors' house. Their neighbor was Mme. Ladmireau, who owned the Clef-d'Or property. Mme. Ladmireau, an old woman, had ripped up her daughter's first communion present, a blue velvet hat, which had been treasured in the family for many years, for the daughter was now forty-five years old, to make scarfs for two of my aviators. She had also given me an old coat of her husband's, who had been dead for many years, and had sewed on it a week to remake the worn velvet lapels. She gave me all of her husband's old clothes for the boys, as well as a bottle of marc she had had for ten years. Whenever Allied planes flew over Barbizon, Mme. Ladmireau would get out in the street and cheer.

Luce Cohn told me that she herself had wanted to help

me in the work for the aviators, but that I could understand how impossible it was for her to take any risks with her Jewish husband hiding in the house, and she added that her husband admired greatly the work we were doing. Occasionally I had told friends in Paris to telephone messages for me at the Cohn house, and Luce said that I now could realize why she had had to discourage that procedure. I suddenly was aware of how much anxiety I must have unwittingly caused this couple when I popped into their house unexpectedly at all times of the day and night. I had even contemplated going to hide there in case I had to hide, because she and the Devignes were always so friendly. I recalled now that one evening when I dropped in, a large bowl of soup and a great dish of potatoes were on the table, and that I had remarked to Nadine later, "Luce Cohn eats more potatoes for one woman than I ever saw anyone eat."

Luce called her husband downstairs. He was a very short man, dark, and bald. He wore tortoiseshell glasses and had an intelligent face, which was also clearly Semitic. He had on house slippers, which he always wore so that he could run back upstairs without making any noise. He took my hands and kissed me on both cheeks, saying what a happy Christmas this was for him, because he had wanted so much to know me.

Luce brought out a bottle of good Vouvray she had been saving for a big occasion. At dinner Jacques Cohn quoted some of the mistakes in French he had overheard me make in my conversations with his wife, and I wondered how much he had also heard of our intimate talks when I

didn't realize there was anyone else in the house. While we were at dinner the doorbell rang, and Jacques disappeared quickly upstairs, while Luce and I removed his plates and put the wine bottle and salt cellar at his place. It was only Mme. Ladmireau, the neighbor, who brought a Christmas gift for Luce. We drank a toast with her, and she went out, but before going she left another little package surreptitiously on the edge of the stairway for Jacques Cohn. Luce had felt it was better not to let her know that I was in on their secret, because it might make her less cautious if she realized others also knew. She whistled to her husband to come down again, and after dinner we went into the studio and listened to the BBC news and to the tune of *Auld Lang Syne* coming over the radio. We linked arms and sang softly, they in French, I in English.

Jacques Cohn had passed some of the time while hiding in his own house by following the campaigns with a map pasted on pieces of cardboard, which he shoved under the rug whenever the doorbell rang. Day after day he watched his wife toiling in their garden without being able to help. A couple of months before, Luce told me, a workman had come to scrape moss from the tiles on the roof. He caught a glimpse of Jacques behind the window in the studio and remarked to Luce that he did not know she had a man in the house. As soon as she had got him to work on the other side of the house, Luce asked "Joe" Louarn, the nurse who occupied their studio, to put on her slacks and glasses and come around to the side of the house so that the workman

could see her. "That's funny," "Joe" said to the workman, "I hear you thought I was a man."

"You do look like a man in that costume," he said, and they all breathed more easily.

Back in my own house later that Christmas Eve, I realized more vividly how thousands of people in France were living daily in fright and anxiety like that which the Cohns experienced. I felt lonely again and virtually a prisoner in this country which was one big prison, even for those who were not locked up officially. I turned on the radio and picked up a program from New York with Artur Rodzinski conducting a symphony orchestra. It brought back to me a day twelve years before in California when I was working in Hollywood. Rodzinski and I had driven over to Santa Barbara, and at lunch a woman read our hands. She said that I would marry a foreigner in a few years and would live many years in France. She predicted that Rodzinski would have great success and a much wider audience than any concert hall could hold. The thought of these happier days depressed me, and I wondered that lonely Christmas Eve whether some of the fliers I had known in Paris, who were at that moment walking somewhere in the snow, would ever reach safety. I began to lose heart and to feel that the years were slipping away. Nothing, not even the work we were doing, seemed at this nostalgic moment to take the place of the past. I also felt deeply the death of my husband and the disappearance of Jean Fraysse. In this mood the war seemed some ghastly disease from which there was no relief.

## V. *The Dawn of Invasion*

### I

THE NEW YEAR 1944 began in France in an atmosphere of fatigue and expectation. No invasion had come, and there were those who began to think that none would ever come. The nation seemed almost to have exhausted its supplies of hope. The aviators I talked to in their hideouts in Paris knew nothing definite about invasion plans, but they all insisted that there would be an invasion in France, and they spoke of the huge concentration of troops in England and the vast growth of English and American airpower.

In Barbizon I wearily decided that I would have to cultivate my land still another spring and summer, and I wondered whether Nadine and I could muster the strength and

spirit to continue, but soon one realized that there was no alternative to the effort for survival.

My efforts to keep food moving into Paris for the aviators were aided at this time by Giselle and Jack Goux. Giselle was the daughter of Alf Grand, the proprietor of Barbizon's American Bar. She was about twenty-eight and spoke perfect English, for her father had been born in England and had only become a naturalized Frenchman after his marriage to a Frenchwoman. Alf Grand was well over sixty. He had been born in a Cockney district of London and had retained his Cockney accent and manner throughout a varied career in several countries. Alf, who was short, very fat, and stocky, looked the perfect English bartender as he stood behind his bar in a room that had been fitted up with rustic tables and contained a deer's head over its big open fireplace. His wife was an aristocratic-looking Frenchwoman whose dignity and refinement were in striking contrast to her rough-and-tumble husband. She was affectionate and cheerful and never lost courage as she supervised the place, walking about neatly dressed and looking very much the lady with her beautiful white hair. At the age of nine, Alf Grand had emigrated in a tramp steamer to Philadelphia, where his brother was chief of police for some years. Alf made frequent trips to France in the crew of tramp steamers, and on one of these he met Louise and married her. They ran a caterer's shop in Washington, D.C., before the last war, and later he managed a big hotel in the north of Scotland. After the *Luisitania* was sunk in May, 1915, all foreigners had to leave that coast of Scotland, and Alf, who

was then a naturalized American, went to France. He served with the American Army in the last war and then became a French citizen so that he could become proprietor of the Hôtel de la Forêt in Barbizon. Later he took the establishment in the center of the village whose proud sign stood during the entire German occupation, proclaiming it "Alf Grand's American Bar." Photographs of Kermit Roosevelt, the Dolly Sisters, and other assorted celebrities adorned the log walls. Nazi officers frequented the place, and even General Stülpnagel, military governor of Paris, was sometimes a patron. Mme. Grand, who never gave up hope of victory over the Germans, insulted them openly and argued with Stülpnagel himself that he needn't think history was going to repeat the war of 1870. She was an ardent de Gaul-list, as were her husband, her daughter, Giselle, and her son-in-law, Jack.

Jack Goux worked with the resistance forces in Paris. Early in 1944 he came to see me and told me that his chief had been taken up by the Germans, that he had a clandestine short-wave sending set in their apartment in Paris but that he felt now that it was too dangerous to keep it there for long. He asked, therefore, if he might use my house on the plain to send his messages. Germans were going around the streets of Paris with bandages over their heads, under which they concealed detection devices for the location of short-wave sending sets, and it was becoming necessary, he told me, to move these sets every twenty minutes, for fear the passing Nazis would discover their locations. I told him that he could use my house if necessary but advised against it because the

Château de Fleury, about two kilometers away, was filled with German troops, and it was impossible to tell what kind of detection devices the Germans might have installed there. He agreed that it would be too risky.

Jack Goux earned his living as a pastry cook in the Coq au Vin, a well-known restaurant in the Halle aux Vins. He was eager to join the Maquis, but was not physically fit. His and Giselle's three-year-old boy, Richard, used to raise a glass in his grandfather's bar and give the toast, "Vive de Gaulle," whether the place was filled with Nazis or not. His grandmother had made him blue overalls out of some material I gave her, and he proudly told everyone he had "Overalls américain." He walked about the tables, boasting, "I'm American." Giselle herself was equally defiant of the Nazis, and loved to walk down the streets of Barbizon in back of Germans, mimicking their strut, and in Paris she took delight in stepping on their feet in the *métro*.

Giselle and Jack came out to Barbizon to visit Giselle's parents at least once a week, and they agreed to take back with them baskets of food for the aviators. Jack's record was definitely good enough to make him trustworthy. In fact, he had hidden machine guns in his father-in-law's bar in Barbizon without the old man's knowledge. I asked if they knew anyone who would take in aviators, and Giselle suggested that they hide some in their own apartment.

"We work all day at the Halle aux Vins," she said, "but I could prepare their food before I go; there's a small radio for them, and they'd be perfectly safe and comfortable. It's



only a little apartment, but it's nice." She suggested, however, that I should not tell her father, because he might get drunk and let slip some remarks, or her mother, because she would worry and was not in good health. The concierge of their building at 160 Rue Jeanne d'Arc in the Gobelins quarter was safe, she said, for she had been hiding French boys escaping the forced-labor draft.

It was a great help to have the co-operation of Giselle and her husband, for my work was rapidly increasing as the air raids were stepped up in preparation for invasion. About a week after my talk with them, Mme. Landras, who with her husband and son cultivated bees extensively at their farm in our neighborhood, came to see me. She told me that a family in the working-class town of Dammarie not far from Barbizon had found an American aviator and were hiding him in their house but could not keep him much longer, for fear of detection. They were looking for someone who could get him on the underground. She told me that the family's name was Buisson, and that the father was a night watchman in a candy factory in Dammarie, and that they had two boys, sixteen and nine. I told Mme. Landras that I would go over to Dammarie next day to get the aviator and asked her to tell the Buissons that they would know me by my Scotch-plaid skirt, a skirt I had got in England before the war, which became a familiar garment to American and British aviators in Paris and the environs.

Next morning I rode the twelve kilometers on my bicycle to 31 bis Avenue Jean Jaurès in Dammarie. It was a

tiny house with an iron gate and a fence. After I pulled the bellcord, I saw the worried face of a woman at the window. She looked up and down the street from the window before she let me in. Mme. Buisson had a fine peasant's face, which showed the lines of hard work. After she welcomed me, she said, "You've come to take our Willie," and she started to weep. "He's adorable and walks now without a limp."

In the house, besides M. and Mme. Buisson, their two sons and their old father, I found Bill Spellman, a flying cadet from Jeffersonville, Indiana. "Oh, boy, to talk English again!" Bill said as he hugged me. Meanwhile, the Buissons kept talking to me in French and Bill in English, while the little Buisson boy kept clutching Bill's arm. Spellman, a boy of nineteen, was dressed in a new shirt and the newest-looking pair of yellow shoes I have ever seen. His pants were worn and too small for him. It was a great relief to see that the Buissons had been able to clothe him with the aid of their friends and fellow workers in Dammarie, for my supply of clothes was never enough for the demand. Bill's shoes had been a gift from a friend of the Buissons' who ran a small shoeshop in Dammarie. Their nineteen-year-old daughter, Giselle, had become very fond of the young American who had fallen in their midst. She used to see him often, and though they spoke different languages, they managed to get on; he taught her jive and she taught him waltzes to the tune of the Buissons' radio.

Bill Spellman had jumped from his flaming plane on an afternoon a week before I saw him. The children in a schoolroom had watched the plane turning over in flames,

and with her field glasses Mme. Buisson had seen the Germans shooting antiaircraft shells at it. No one could imagine that Bill had got out alive through these continuous puffs of antiaircraft fire, but Alex, a half-Russian, half-French schoolboy, a friend of the oldest Buisson boy, took a tour that evening before going home from school. He thought he remembered just about where Bill should have come down, alive or dead.

Bill told me that he landed in a little wood. He had been shot in the hip and another piece of flak had lodged lower in his leg. There were eleven holes in his parachute. He lay quietly in the wood for a few minutes and managed to bury his parachute under brush and leaves along with his log book and wrist watch. Then he crept along the woods to the edge of a ditch beside a road. He was going to try to cross the road when he saw a kid coming along on a bicycle. A man was walking alongside the boy. Bill thought they had spotted him, but tried to hide in the ditch. The man kept walking, and the boy halted near where Bill was hiding and pretended to fix his bicycle tire. As soon as the man had got some distance ahead, the boy dropped his bicycle and came toward Bill. Spellman thought he had fallen in Germany, for he had been bombing Ludwigshafen and the plane had first been hit while they were still over Germany. He drew his knife and planned to hurl it at the boy, but he could not throw it because the pain in his hip and leg made him fall back into the ditch.

"Anglais?" the boy asked.

Bill didn't answer. The boy explained, "I am French, and I can speak some English."

"I'm American," Bill said. The boy kissed him. Then he helped Bill to his feet but realized that he could not move him at that time because German patrols were prowling all over the neighborhood, looking for the aviator who had fallen from the plane. Nevertheless, he helped Bill to a temporary hiding place behind a big rock off the road and told him to lie there until he could get help to move him later in the day when it would be safer. The boy then rushed off on his bicycle to the Buisson house. He did not go home, because his father was a White Russian and the boy did not trust him.

When the boy had told him about Bill, M. Buisson went to the convent of Russian nuns near Dammarie and borrowed a priest's hat and cassock. The convent was near where Bill was lying, and near by was the Château de Vaux, one of the famous châteaux of France, now owned by the family of M. Sommer, a sugar merchant. As German patrols were still out, it was impossible to move Bill with safety all the way to the Buisson house that night, but the nuns gave permission for him to hide in their chickenhouse, despite the fact that their convent had been searched three times by the Germans that afternoon. The Nazis knew that nuns in France frequently hid fugitives. M. Buisson put the priest's robe and hat on the American radio operator and turret gunner, propped him up on the boy's bicycle, and with Alex and himself to steady Bill on either side moved him to the chickenhouse. It was impossible to get medical

aid for him that night, but the nuns made up a straw bed for him in a corner of the chickenhouse and gave him a blanket and a bottle of rum. Mme. Sommer came over from the Château de Vaux to visit him and to apologize in perfect English for not being able to take him in there because Germans were occupying part of it. Bill took several swigs of the bottle of rum and fell asleep.

Early next morning Buisson and his older son came for Bill. They put the priest's hat and robe on him again, hoisted him onto a bicycle, and led him in full daylight to their little house in Dammarie. There was so much activity on the streets of this busy industrial community that they were inconspicuous in the crowd. The Buissons got a doctor who dressed Bill's wounds. Two days before they took Bill Spellman in, the Gestapo had searched every house in the Avenue Jean Jaurès except the Buisson house. As the house was shut up, while the Buissons were visiting their small farm near by, the Germans thought it unoccupied. However, it was dangerous for the Buissons to keep Bill a moment longer than necessary.

Mme. Buisson invited me into the kitchen, where the table was laid out with a feast. There was a beautifully roasted guinea hen she had brought in from her farm, and she produced real coffee she had been saving for a big occasion and a bottle of champagne. They drank to Bill Spellman and to me, and while the old father sat in his chair and wept openly, they told us how much they hated to part with Bill. After the meal I went to the railroad station at Melun to get tickets for myself and Bill to Paris,

where I planned to hide him until he could get on the underground. Mme. Buisson sent her son to fetch Giselle, Bill's new conquest, so that she, too, could say good-by. When I got back with the tickets, I found Giselle there, a pretty blonde girl with large tears in her blue eyes. "Ask him to promise he will come back," she said to me.

"You are coming back after the war, aren't you, Bill?" I asked.

"Of course," Bill replied. Giselle showed me a ring with wings Bill had given her as a souvenir, and M. Buisson presented Bill with a large box of precious sugar-coated almonds he had smuggled out of the candy factory where he worked. Everybody kissed everybody else. Mme. Buisson assured me that she would bring me food from her farm regularly to help out with the problem of feeding the aviators.

Bill, in his strange French clothes, and I, in my green tartan skirt, started down the road together for the Melun station. I warned Bill not to open his mouth and had bought him a copy of *Rustica*, the popular farm journal, telling him to pretend to read that and to pretend to sleep after we got settled in the train. On the Melun platform there were German soldiers, Luftwaffe men from the military airfield at Villaroche.

We got into a compartment with some German soldiers, an old Frenchman and an old Frenchwoman. Bill took out *Rustica* and dozed. I read a book and peered over at him occasionally, marveling at how young he looked. The crowded train was delayed because that morning saboteurs

had derailed another train, and we had to make a detour to reach Paris.

From the Gare de Lyon we walked to the Isle St. Louis across the footbridge back of Notre Dame. "That's Notre Dame, the famous church," I explained to Bill.

"I know about that," he said. "We've got a football team at home called Notre Dame."

I had decided to take Bill to the apartment of Katherine Dudley at 13 Rue de Seine, and before leaving Barbizon had asked Nadine to telephone Katherine and tell her not to leave her house as I would be there to visit her. The hideouts where we usually kept aviators were all filled up, and I needed a bed for him for the night at least. It would have been too risky to come into the village of Barbizon with him, where any new face was conspicuous and where I was too well known. Besides, he had to be taken into Paris eventually anyway, and two trips were twice as dangerous as one. Katherine had no servants, and it seemed safe to leave him there, though she had known nothing of my work with aviators until it became necessary to give her an example of it now.

After Katherine opened the door, I pulled Bill in with me and told her, "I've brought you a house guest for the night." I explained Bill to her and told her I would find another place for him next day. I left Bill with her and went to Mme. Christol's to make arrangements for him there. I found she had a full house, however, and I finally arranged with Giselle and Jack Goux at the Coq au Vin to bring Bill to their apartment next morning.

We put Bill on a daybed that night in the little salon in Katherine's apartment, under an enlarged photograph of one of Picasso's paintings, a picture of a woman whose full face contained also her profile. Bill took one look at it and said, "Do I have to sleep under that?"

Katherine, who was a good friend and an admirer of Picasso, drew herself up and asked, "You fall ten thousand feet in a parachute, and yet you're afraid to sleep under a beautiful Picasso like that?"

"I'll have nightmares all night," Bill insisted.

The three of us had a meal of leek and potato soup and sausage, and then Bill went to bed. Katherine and I sat up talking, and she said to me in bewilderment, "I tried to talk with him while you were out, but there seems to be no general conversation in the boy, and he didn't seem to want to talk about his experience. I found out, however, that they aren't rationed in America as much as the German radio says, and there are still plenty of automobiles on the road." Katherine Dudley, a woman about sixty, looked somewhat like a Marie Laurencin portrait. She came originally from Chicago and had lived in Paris for more than twenty-five years.

Next morning I walked Bill Spellman over to the Goux apartment in the Rue Jeanne d'Arc. He was impressed by the number of charming old buildings in this ancient quarter of Paris. Giselle knew English, and Jack could talk a little too, and they were delighted to have one of the aviators in their house. But as their restaurant was doing practically no business at this time and Alf Grand's bar was not



flourishing, I had to find them the wherewithal to care for a guest.

The following Sunday I took Bill Spellman for a walk in the Tuileries. We covered his curious clothing with a raincoat M. Christol lent me. As we walked through the Place de la Concorde the swastika flags were flying on the German headquarters in the Hôtel Crillon and the Ministry of Marine across the way. I pointed out the American Embassy, where the flagstaff was empty. Walking up the Champs Élysées, we passed many Luftwaffe officers and high-ranking Nazis with their women on their arms. On the way back, via the Invalides, an old man accompanied by a young girl stepped up and asked Bill a direction. He started to reply, but I quickly intervened and said that we were strangers in town ourselves.

The Buissons and Giselle came to the Goux apartment the following week to pay Bill a visit. They arrived with two sacks filled with chickens, eggs, chocolate, candy, milk, and white bread which Mme. Buisson had baked. Giselle had made her friend a pair of embroidered carpet slippers. They sat on the sofa and held hands, and Bill asked me to tell her that she had beautiful blue eyes. Giselle once more asked me to get his promise to return to France after the war.

After two more weeks at the Goux' apartment, word came from Geneviève, our contact with the underground convoys, to bring Bill to the carroussel in the Tuileries Gardens at four o'clock the next afternoon. It was just about time, for Bill was getting restless, cooped up in the Goux

apartment, and had taken to whistling softly to girls he saw passing by from the bay window. I took Bill to the rendezvous on a bitter day in February. He was wearing a nice, heavy wool muffler Robert Devigne had given me, and he had on a good overcoat another friend had got him from an American's château in the Loire district. He carried his food box with patés, hard-boiled eggs, and gingerbread. We had sewed messages into his coat which Geneviève had asked us to send out with him, and he got the usual briefing about General Smuts.

In the Tuileries each of the hostesses brought her boy, and eight aviators were turned over that day to the French boys and Geneviève, who got them on the first lap of their route to freedom. As we left our charges, each of us women went off in different directions, and some of us were weeping, for we never knew how many of these boys would get out of France alive.

My contacts with American fliers were becoming more frequent now. Not long after Bill Spellman left Paris, Bellanger, the farmer in Achères from whom I got grain, meat, butter, and eggs, came to see me and told me that he had an American aviator hiding at his farm who had to be taken away as soon as possible because the Germans were active in Achères and well-known collaborators lived there. The boy, whose name was Mickey Coles, came from Georgia, and had fallen near Nemours at a farm some distance from Bellanger's. He had come down onto the slate roof of one of the farm buildings and slid off into the courtyard. Germans were all over the neighborhood at the time, and

the old farmer, who was loading manure in his farmyard, quickly put Mickey into the manure cart, parachute and all, covered him up with manure and hay, and stuck a stove-pipe into the pile so that he could breathe. He had barely finished when the Germans arrived, looking for Mickey. They looked everywhere but under the manure and found it hard to understand how the boy had disappeared so quickly. They searched for him for nine hours, sticking pitchforks into haystacks and even looking down the well. After they left, the farmer drove his cart to a farm some distance away and unloaded Mickey Coles there. Here Mickey got a basin of water and tried to scrub off some of the cow dung, but five days later when I went for him, he still smelled of manure. The farmer gave him a pair of sabots and some old clothes, and the farmer's son took him on a bicycle to the Bellanger place. As the Germans had searched Bellanger's farm twice that week for grain they suspected him of concealing from their requisition officers, and as he was also hiding a French worker whom he did not know well, he was anxious to get rid of Mickey as soon as possible. A German had been shot in the village of Achères, and the Germans were searching vigorously for arms. They had already jailed several of the inhabitants.

I went to see Robilliard next morning and told him we had to get a boy who was very ill and was hiding at Bellanger's farm. At the lunch hour when the roads were not crowded, we drove over to Achères in Robilliard's truck, picked up Mickey Coles, and drove to Melun to catch the Paris train. As he and I came down the steps of the Gare

de Lyon that afternoon, Mickey had a hard time keeping his sabots on his feet, and he took them off and walked in the old carpet slippers he wore inside the wooden shoes. Nobody paid any attention, for people had become accustomed to all kinds of costumes on the streets of Paris during the occupation. I took Mickey to an apartment in the Denfert-Rochereau quarter. The woman who lived there was highly recommended to us, even though her daughter was living at the Ritz with a German and she herself worked from seven in the morning until six at night in a factory which was making material for the Germans. In her evenings she worked hard for the aviators, and her daughter used to help out by bringing socks, shoes, underwear, chocolate, and cigarettes she had got from the enemy, or with money supplied by him.

It was getting particularly unhealthy for the enemy to walk through the streets of Paris these days in 1944, and before one realized it one could become involved in an "incident." One day when I was hurrying along a bridge across the Seine to get Dr. Porcher for one of our aviators who was suffering from concussion after his parachute jump, two young Frenchmen walked quickly past me. They were following a Nazi officer in front of them. As they passed me, they said something to me which sounded like, "Now you'll see how we do it." Before I knew what was happening, one of them had stuck a knife between the shoulder blades of the Nazi officer, and before the Nazi could hit the pavement, the other had him by the seat of the pants and had hurled him into the Seine. I and the other specta-

tors on the bridge that afternoon ran as fast as we could to get out of the neighborhood, not even daring to look back, and the two young French patriots had run even faster than we could.

## II

THE EARLY months of 1944 were filled with activity and difficulty for me. One day in February, I was called suddenly to the telephone at Robilliard's garage. He said it was a call from Paris, and that the name sounded like Mme. de Chambrun. It turned out to be the Mme. de Chambrun who was Pierre Laval's daughter. She explained that she had intended to come out to Barbizon that day on her way back to Vichy to call on me but was very rushed and therefore decided to tell me her business on the telephone.

"We need an American woman to broadcast in English," Mme. de Chambrun said, "and you have been recommended to me. I know you Americans in France need money these days, and I think I can get you 60,000 francs a month."

"I'm sure you must have me confused with someone else," I said. "I know nothing about broadcasting, and besides I have been very ill and cannot possibly do a job."

Mme. de Chambrun said that she was sorry to hear that I was ill and thought that we had met some years before at the house of a well-known society painter. I thanked her for thinking of me and told her I regretted that I was unable to help her. I had many uneasy moments thereafter, for I was

afraid that at last the Vichy French, and through them the Nazis, may have connected me with the Drue Leyton who had worked for Paris Mondiale before the Nazi occupation, and who had been sentenced to death on the German radio. It had seemed to me miraculous that the association had not been made by the Nazis long ago, but this was another instance of the fact that even the Nazis could not think of or find out everything.

They had found out something, however, about my husband's aunt, Maria Errazurez. I went into Paris early one day in March with a batch of false identity cards which Moulin, my contact with the resistance people in Melun, had given me for some of our aviators and for Jewish children whom Maria Errazurez was hiding. I telephoned to Maria Errazurez as soon as I arrived in Paris. She answered the phone but said quickly, "I don't feel well. I can't talk to you now." Since I knew how hard she was working at her hospital and in her work for Jewish children, I was worried about her health and decided to go to her apartment at once and see what was wrong.

When the maid opened the door in Maria's apartment in the Avenue du Président Wilson and saw me standing there, she turned white and whispered, "Go away, go away, your aunt was arrested this morning, and Gestapo men are in her library now, going over her papers. They're downstairs at the door, and it's a wonder they didn't stop you." My knees turned weak, for if I were caught with all my false identity papers in my bag, I was doomed.

I started downstairs again, and a nurse with two children

was walking down in front of me. I took the hand of each of the children and said to the nurse, "Let me walk out with you, please." We went past the guard, who was smoking a cigarette and walking up and down near the front entrance. Then I went to the corner and sat down at the Café Francise until I could tell whether I was being followed, for I did not dare go on my other visits until I had made sure of that.

Later that day I telephoned Maria from a café and said, "I'm sorry to hear you are ill. I think I can get you a very good doctor for your trouble." I intended to get in touch with Georges Hilaire, Jean Fraysse's friend in the Vichy Ministry of the Interior, and see if he could help Maria.

"No, please don't worry about me. I'll be all right," Maria answered. That was the last I heard from her until after the liberation of Paris. Then I learned that Maria had been taken to the Gestapo prison, where they had subjected her to tortures, including insertion of electric needles in the womb and salt injections in the veins, in the effort to make her talk. She had been hiding twenty-two Jewish children and had also helped elderly Jewish people to escape from the Nazis. When they could get no admission of these activities out of her, even by torture, the Nazis, who apparently had had nothing but a rumor or a denunciation to go on in her case, brought her back to her own apartment and kept her there under house arrest until Paris was liberated and they had to flee.

After liberation Maria, who had been a beautiful woman of about fifty, looked completely changed by her ordeal,

but she was in good spirits because of the liberation. During her house arrest she had taken to bookbinding to keep herself from going insane, for she had been accustomed to a very active life taking care of others. She told me then that one of the boys who had worked with my husband's half-brother, Philip Keun, had turned up in Paris and gone to see a friend of Philip's. He told her that he had been with Philip and three others when they were caught by the Nazis while they were waiting for a plane to take them back to England after a job of sabotage they had performed. Philip had suffered injuries to two vertebrae when he made a bad parachute drop and was compelled to wear a steel corset. The saboteurs were taken to the Nazi prison at Fresnes, where the Germans had beaten this one boy so badly that they had thought him dead and had hurled his body on a pile of corpses, but he had revived and got into Paris. After the Americans entered Buchenwald I learned that Philip had been taken there and tortured. He had been over six feet tall and usually weighed about a hundred and eighty. On the day the Germans finally killed him at Buchenwald he weighed eighty pounds. He was killed two weeks before the horror camp was captured.

Another difficult time for me came in March, 1944. Not long after I had left Bill Spellman with Katherine Dudley for the night, she spent the week end at Orgeval, near St. Germain, with Noel Murphy and Gladys Delmass, two of our companions in internment at Vittel. Jean Delmass, Gladys' husband, who worked with Vichy government people on paper quotas, was also present. Noel Murphy and



the Delmass couple mentioned in the course of conversation that Americans were beginning to feel the pinch of the war and that there was severe rationing in the United States, adding that they did not think the intense bombing of German and French objectives could keep up much longer because we were losing so many planes and crews. Katherine Dudley, having talked with Cadet Bill Spellman about rationing, spoke up and said that from what she heard Americans were eating well and lacked very little. The attitude of the others in the room aroused her anger, and without thinking that she ought reveal our work to no one, she said, "Why, I was talking with a boy from the States the other night, and he said there wasn't much rationing."

"Where were you talking with a boy from the States?" one of them asked.

"Oh, he was a boy a friend of mine brought to the house," Katherine answered. "He had fallen from a plane."

"Who brought him to you?" one of them asked.

"Oh, a friend of mine who lives out near Senlis," Katherine answered. She had suddenly realized that she had been careless, and quickly disguised the geography, for Senlis was in the opposite direction from Barbizon in relation to Paris.

"I'll bet it's Drue," one of the others remarked. Katherine Dudley denied this and tried to get off the subject as quickly as possible. Gladys Delmass was curious about me, for I had not wanted to see her and only a few days before I had refused an invitation she had sent me, asking me to

stay with her and her husband when I was in Paris and expressing a desire to visit me in Barbizon.

My wish to avoid her went back to an incident about a month before I received this invitation. I had had lunch with Gladys Delmass and her husband at Katherine Dudley's apartment in Paris, and during lunch the Delmass couple criticized American bombing of French and German civilians as "terror bombing."

This attitude appalled me, and I answered: "I just don't understand how you can possibly take that position after what the Germans did to civilians in Warsaw, Rotterdam, and London when they were doing the bombing."

"Shut up, Drue," Gladys Delmass said. "Let's not discuss it any further. We like you, and it will spoil our friendship if we go on like this. We all have a right to our opinions."

The atmosphere during the rest of the lunch remained cold, and Jean and Gladys Delmass left soon afterwards.

"That's the end," I said to Katherine Dudley. "I will never see those people again."

The week after Katherine Dudley had spent the week end at Orgeval she came out to Barbizon to spend the week end with me. Sunday morning Georges Andrieux, a rare-book dealer, who was a friend of Jean Fraysse and of my friend in Paris, Tudor Wilkinson, arrived suddenly on his bicycle at my house. Andrieux had helped me to sell books and after my return from internment at Vittel had lent me 20,000 francs and had offered me more at any time I needed it. Though over sixty years old, Andrieux rode the sixty kilometers to Barbizon fast. When I let him into the house,

he was excited and told me at once the reason: "Tudor Wilkinson asked me to hurry out here to see you. A very bad thing has happened. Some friend of yours has revealed that you are hiding aviators. She was at Noel Murphy's place in the country and—"

"Wait a minute," I said. "She's right here in the kitchen, and I want her to hear this." I called to Katherine Dudley to come in. After he told us that her week-end friends had become suspicious of me, Katherine said, "But I didn't say it was you. I made a slip, but I didn't mention any names."

Noel Murphy, I learned later, had gone to Ruth Dubonnet and told her that she thought I was up to something, though she was not sure of it. She said that she thought I was working for fallen aviators, and that if I got caught, all Americans who had been released might be taken up again and maybe shot. Noel Murphy was reported to have said to Ruth Dubonnet, "I think Drue should be taken up."

Ruth Dubonnet had then gone to see my friends Tudor Wilkinson and his wife, Dolores. Tudor Wilkinson was a noted connoisseur of art and had an excellent collection of Holbeins. Before America's entry into the war, Hermann Goering had come to the apartment to see this collection. After Pearl Harbor, upstairs on the next floor in this same apartment at 18 Quai d'Orléans a short-wave radio was installed to communicate with London for the French underground, and behind the huge fireplace in the apartment and in back of the beautiful, carved woodwork machine guns were stored for resistance. Tudor's secretary, a former professor at the Sorbonne, who helped him in his

historical researches, was one of the most active members of the *cheminot* resistance group, which had organized French railroad workers into an efficient group for helping French patriots and foreign fliers to escape and for sabotage of German transport in France.

Ruth Dubonnet told Tudor Wilkinson what she had heard about me from Noel Murphy and asked his opinion whether I could be engaged in work for aviators. She said that if this was true, it was a serious matter for all Americans who had been released from Vittel and especially for her, because she said that she had given me a recommendation to Hutterman, and that that was how I had managed to get out of Vittel.

"It isn't possible," Tudor replied. "Drue is much too ill. She is here a lot with us, and I know more about her than you do."

"What a ridiculous idea!" Dolores added. "The girl is hardly able to take care of herself, let alone getting involved in anything like that. She's a physical wreck. In fact, we're very worried about her because she's sick, lonely, and at the end of her rope, and we've asked her to come in here and stay with us." Ruth Dubonnet left the Wilkinsons, apparently satisfied that there was nothing to the story she had heard.

I was still very nervous about my experience at Maria Errazurez' apartment. Though I had not noticed anyone following me when I got out of there, I could not be sure that the Gestapo was not playing its game of permitting a

suspect to remain at large so that they might discover some of the accomplices and associates and pounce suddenly on all of them. I decided to ask the advice of my friend Dr. Porcher, who had had so much experience in helping people to evade the Germans. That Sunday afternoon I went into Paris to consult Dr. Porcher, and next day when I told him my story, he said, "We'll put you in the American Hospital right away. We'll do a curettage, send the result to the laboratory, get a positive cancer certificate, and I don't think you will have any trouble proving that you are too ill to be guilty of resistance activity."

I went into the American Hospital that Monday afternoon, and Dr. Varangot performed the operation next morning. Katherine Dudley came to see me at the hospital with the bad news that she herself was being sent back to the internment camp at Vittel, from which she had been released temporarily. This worried me all the more, and in order to establish firmly in the German mind that I was very ill, I telephoned to Hutterman at the Gestapo and told him I had had an operation and would like to see him. He came over that same day, and I explained that I had undergone a preliminary operation and that I had a very bad cancer. He was sympathetic, said that he didn't have much confidence in French doctors, and suggested that I consult two good German gynecologists who were then in Paris.

"I have complete confidence in Dr. Varangot and Dr. Porcher," I answered. "They are the finest men in France for my kind of trouble." Hutterman suggested that if I

showed no improvement, I should let him know and told me to be sure to call on him if there was anything he could do for me.

After five days in the hospital I went back to Barbizon. This operation, performed to throw the Germans off the scent, caused me delay in my spring planting and further physical weakness. While I was in the hospital Nadine had had to do both the farm work and the work necessary for getting provisions into Paris for the hidden aviators.

### III

ON MY return to Barbizon I found that Herr Pat, a Luxembourgish, had installed himself with his wife and two children in a house near mine. He was head of the Gestapo for the entire department of Seine-et-Marne. The niece of the proprietor of the hotel in Barbizon where Herr Pat stayed while his house was being prepared for his occupancy told me that he had asked questions about me and Marion Greenough, the only Americans left in the town. He had been told that Marion was a harmless old lady, kind and beloved by everyone, and that I was very ill, lived quietly, and seldom went out. He said that he had heard in Paris that I was dying of cancer.

After my narrow escape from denunciation I was inactive for a while and was afraid to cultivate the farm at my place on the plain, confining myself to some gardening in Barbizon, where I could not be seen at work from the road. I managed to plant a big vegetable garden there that spring

and put in about 2000 onions as well as quantities of potatoes, squash, and beans and rows of sweet corn. Giselle and Jack Goux came out from Paris regularly and took back food for the aviators hiding there. I still went in at least once a week to visit the boys, and we corresponded via Giselle and Jack, the boys always signing their letters with girls' names as an extra precaution.

There was increased tension every week in Paris during the spring of 1944, as everyone waited for the invasion, including the Germans. Though we had nothing definite to go on, people began to feel that the landing would occur almost any day. In March the "Essor" resistance group broke into the law schools in Paris and captured files which the Nazis had compiled for their forced-labor draft of students. Similar exploits were carried out in other schools in Paris and Lyon, as well as at the Ministry of Labor, where the students managed to destroy thousands of names of conscripts. These exploits made the Germans more and more watchful, and they threw cordons around various sections of Paris, making the chances of detection all the greater for us. It was now impossible to take the boys for walks in the streets of Paris. Fortunately it was no longer necessary for M. Christol and me to take them to a photographer in the Gobelins district to get their passport pictures made for their false papers; by this time the fliers were being provided with sets of these pictures before taking off from England.

During this preparatory period for invasion we listened even more carefully to the broadcasts of the BBC and our

own Office of War Information, which came in very clearly during the early hours of the morning. The RAF and American air forces dropped the invaluable *Courrier de l'Air*, a short newspaper, which was of great aid and comfort to us. These were widely distributed by the people who found them in fields and streets. Occasionally I would find one of these thin sheets with their red, white, and blue ink and designs in my mailbox, put there by a loyal peasant who had written on it, "*Courage, Madame, c'est pas long maintenant.*" My friend Louis, who worked on the Gurdé farm, found a bundle of *Courrier de l'Air* dropped in a field. He got drunk that evening and went down the Grande Rue in Barbizon with the forbidden tracts under his arm, shouting like a newsboy, "*Dernières nouvelles! Dernières nouvelles!*" The Nazis had threatened to impose the death penalty for possession of this air edition, but Mme. Ladmireau grabbed Louis and got him out of harm's way into her house.

Our planes also dropped coils of silver paper in order to interfere with the German radar system. The villagers and peasants picked them up and wore them brazenly for decorations or put rosettes made out of them on their horses. One day I found Jimmie, the goose, happily playing with one of these coils.

The Nazis began to requisition all copper and brass, and an order was issued that everyone must deliver his pots and pans of these materials before July or pay a heavy fine. I was assessed 18 kilos of copper and ordered to pay a fine of 18,000 francs if I defaulted. Nobody worried about these



assessments, for we were confident that the invasion would come before the requisition could go into effect. The Germans increased their patrols in the neighborhood, and it was too risky now to go out at night on the country roads. Everywhere one noticed signs that the Germans troops were getting tense and jittery.

On April 23, 1944, St. George's Day, Jean Maillard gave a fine luncheon at the Hôtel Bas-Bréau in Barbizon. Maillard was a good friend of the de Gesnes, who owned the house I rented in Barbizon. He owned a bottle works in Paris, property at St. Nazaire, and patents on which he collected royalties from the Nazis. Jean Maillard was a short, stocky man who looked very much like Huey Long, the American politician. He was dynamic and quite American in temperament. While he milked the Nazis of money in business deals with them, he turned it over to the resistance movement and particularly to the leaders of the *cheminot* resistance movement. Maillard had also organized resistance among French workers inside Germany, where sabotage was being carried out on as large a scale as possible within Nazi factories.

For St. George's Day Jean Maillard invited me, May de Gesnes, her eighty-four-year-old mother, who was an American woman originally from New York, and Georges Andrieux, my bookdealer friend, and his wife. It was a Sunday, and when we sat down to dinner Herr Pat, Gestapo chief of the Seine-et-Marne, was at the next table with a group of Nazi officers. Sacha Guitry and his wife were dining with another group of Germans at a near-by table, and Jean

Luchaire, collaborationist editor for the Nazis, had a party of friends at another table. Jean Maillard had boasted to us when he invited us in February that he was going to celebrate this English holiday openly under the noses of the Nazis, and he certainly had chosen the right place. He had also said that he would toast the King and would bet that they would not arrest him. This was one of the few times in all my stay in Barbizon that I had dared to go to dinner in any of the hotels frequented by the Nazis.

We drank to King George, rising, raising our glasses, and shouting, "Au roi!" The Germans around us got angrier as we got gayer. Suddenly May de Gesnes' elderly mother leaned across the table and said to me in English, "Our cat Moon had kittens this morning; there are black ones, black and white, and gray and white; come up this afternoon and choose one." I answered that I would and that I would take a black one for good luck and call it George after the King. There was a silence at the Nazi table in back of us, and then one of the Germans called over Mme. Buffo, the proprietress, an Italian woman. She signaled to me shortly afterwards, and I joined her in the patio of the hotel.

"Madame, do you know who that man is?" she asked.

"No," I answered.

"That's Herr Pat, the Gestapo chief. He says that if he hears one more word of English from your table, he will close the hotel, put everyone on the street, and have our houses searched. He asked who you were, and I told him that you were a week-end visitor from Paris and I didn't

know you." I thanked her, went back to the table, and after briefly explaining to May and her mother in French, I went home. We had tempted fate long enough, and I didn't want Pat to identify me as the woman who was supposed to be dying of cancer.

On May 18, while I was working at my place on the plain, a squadron of American Flying Fortresses suddenly flew over me on their way back from a bombing mission against Etampes. I saw one of the planes hit by a shell and go up in flames. Then a second plane was blown to bits in mid-air and fell, seemingly directly over my house. I saw the crews hurl themselves out of the planes and come down in burning parachutes. One of the German fighter planes that had been chasing the Fortresses suddenly fell in flames in a near-by field. I ran toward it, as did the peasants working in the fields. The peasants stopped some distance from the burning wreckage for fear the plane would explode, but instinctively I was going on to rescue the man pinned in the Nazi plane. As I ran toward it one of the peasants raised his hoe and said, "If you go near that plane, I'll hit you over the head. He's a dirty Boche!" We saw the Nazi pilot burn up as the plane became a seething mass of flames.

Next day a farmer from Arbonne told me that, in a big communal grave in Arbonne cemetery, the Germans had buried the group of American aviators shot down in that dogfight. I went over there to get information on the boys from the mayor. He told me that the Germans fought over the rings and money they had stripped from the fingers and pockets of the American fliers, and he was disgusted

when he saw them rip wedding rings from the fingers of three of the boys. Nine Americans had been thrown into one trench and even the priest was refused admittance to the funeral. The mayor said that the Germans would probably give him a list of the names and numbers of the dead fliers and that he would give me a copy. I went back to Arbonne next day on my bicycle. It was pouring rain. No one was inside the neat little cemetery on the edge of the forest, with its border of sad cypresses. I found the new ditch the Germans had dug, and it was covered completely with a mass of flowers the peasants had put over it. Little signs were attached to bouquets, reading: *Aux braves garçons américains*. Nine little crosses had been put up on this communal grave. A month and a half later a tenth body was found in the hills among the rocks and buried next to his comrades. On the list of names of these boys the mayor gave me were Italian, Irish, and German names. Marion Greenough kindly offered to send personal letters to each of their families as soon as we could send mail again to America. Later, on Bastille Day, July 14, these graves were again covered with masses of flowers.

During May, 1944, our bombing of German installations was intensified every day and night. Every town in our neighborhood where there was any railroad junction was hit, and though it meant difficulty for us and some danger, we were glad. We heard with satisfaction of the bombings of Orléans, Chartres, Etampes, Châteaudun, Trappes, and the near-by rail junction of Villeneuve-Saint-Georges, for we realized that that meant land action before long. On June

4, I went into Paris to see two new American aviators at Mme. Olga's house. The boys told me that the English Channel was filled with invasion barges as far as the eye could see, that all leaves had been canceled in the air force, that no one had been allowed off airfields in England during the past few days, and that they thought the invasion was coming any day.

Next day, Jean Maillard arrived at my house in Barbizon, accompanied by Cornu and Jacquemin, railroad resistance men. Cornu had two sons who were political prisoners in Germany and another son with French intelligence in England. Maillard brought me a young suckling pig of blooded English stock called Arthur and two baby geese from his place in St. Nazaire. We were drinking tea and listening to the radio at about six o'clock that evening. On the BBC program in French the announcer said unobtrusively, "*Les dés sont sur la table*"—the die is cast. Cornu put down his cup and said, "We must get back to Paris, but in a hurry." His face was white.

As we walked to their car, I said, "M'sieu Cornu, what do you think about the day for invasion?"

"It could come tomorrow," he said. "Then, again, it may not come for a month."

When Nadine and I were alone again I told her I thought the invasion was coming next day. "*Madame*," she said, "you've been saying that for about two years."

I went to sleep that night in the house on the plain. Early in the morning—it must have been about six-thirty—Nadine came rushing in. I heard her open the gate and

thought something awful must have happened. Nadine fell into my arms, crying, and said, "*Ça y est! Ça y est! C'est l'invasion! Ils ont débarqués ce matin!*"

We hurried back to the house in Barbizon, and I did not leave the radio for hours. Warnings were being broadcast every few minutes about keeping away from certain areas and instructions were being sent out to French forces. Nadine came back from the bakery and said that the whole village seemed to be holding its breath, that people had tears in their eyes and were too tense to cheer. At Robilliard's garage later that morning six people I scarcely knew came up to me with tears in their eyes and shook my hand because I was an American. "*Les américains sont magnifiques,*" one of them said, "*ils sont là! ils sont là!*"

The German radio, too, was busy. It blared out regularly that this attempt would be a massacre, another Dieppe only on a big scale, and that there was no chance of success for the English and Americans. By nightfall we heard the tramp of German troops along the main roads and the movements of their vehicles. The whole Fontainebleau road was one mass of troops and cars, and we got the impression that the Nazis had been taken by surprise and were moving up their reinforcements late.

That night Moulin, my contact with the resistance people in Melun, came to see me. He asked if I did not want to hide. I told him I never felt safer in all my time in Barbizon, but he warned me that, on the contrary, now was the most dangerous moment, for the Nazis might grab all Americans not already interned. He also told me that Pat,

the Gestapo chief, that afternoon had ordered his house redecorated. "He's insane," Moulin said. "He doesn't seem to realize that he's going to move fast one of these days."

After sundown German patrols made regular rounds every two hours, and the curfew was put at ten-thirty at night. Anybody on the streets after that hour could be shot, and people were ordered to keep off the roads after sundown. After a few days only Gestapo men and their patrols remained in Barbizon. The rest of the soldiers from the garrison were moved up rapidly. Resistance men put out an order to the farmers not to give the Germans any more grain even on their requisition demands and not to thrash any more grain until further notice, on penalty of having their farms burned down and being shot.

Young Frenchmen in our neighborhood were wild with excitement and frustration. They did not know where to go to join up with the fighting forces. Giselle and her husband arrived from Paris and told me the English and American fliers in hiding there were almost jumping out of their skins. They talked of making a run for it and joining the invading forces. The underground convoy system practically stopped on D-Day, for the resistance people realized that it was no longer worth the great risk in lives to take boys on the perilous journeys across mountains and rivers when, within a relatively short time, they hoped to be able to get them to their own forces in France.

All electricity was shut off in Paris after D-Day, and gas was only supplied for one hour a day. Candles were scarce, and the people sat in the dark. The water supply was care-

fully rationed and there was water only a couple of hours a day. Without electricity, only those with dry-cell radio sets could get the news. We kept working and waiting for our liberation. The Allied advance, difficult as it was for the invading forces, seemed at first painfully slow to us impatient inhabitants of Fortress Europe.



## VI. *Rescue and Liberation*

### I

I WENT INTO Paris on the Fourth of July, carrying baskets full of provisions with me. The railroad station at Melun had been bombed a few days before, but the railroad was functioning again. While I waited on the Melun station platform with other passengers for the train, German planes flew low over our heads, and there was some panic at the station, for some people thought they might be English planes, which had hedge-hopped in Melun a few days before when dropping their bombs. Finally, we got into the train, and just as it pulled into the junction at Villeneuve-Saint-Georges, the air-raid sirens sounded. We had been told by the radio to keep off the railroads. German soldiers and

French civilians rushed out of the train into the open fields, but I could see no sense in exposing oneself that way, and figured that I might just as well take my chances in the train. By sticking my head out of the window I could see waves and waves of heavy bombers overhead. The Germans put up very heavy antiaircraft fire, and puffs of smoke continually filled the air. The bombers unloaded their bombs on the German airfield at Orly near by. The ground rocked and fragments of antiaircraft shells fell all around. Fortunately, no bombs hit Villeneuve-Saint-Georges that day. Rail traffic had been so much disrupted by recent bombings that it took four hours to make the fifty kilometers to Paris.

When I arrived in Paris after noon, the air-raid sirens went off there. The *métro* stopped running, and I finally got a boy on a bicycle to help me with my heavy baskets. German trucks, covered with camouflage in the form of the branches of trees and nets, hurried through the streets. German soldiers were wearing their camouflage coats. Some of the trucks and other cars were pockmarked with bullets and had dents from shell fragments. The Nazis, who for four years had looked so neat, now looked as if they had just come out of pigsties and cow flop. They also looked worried and grim and had lost their jaunty arrogance.

With the help of Charles at Sarah Watson's Foyer International, I took my food on the regular round to Mme. Christol's, Mme. Heraux', and the other apartments where boys were hiding. It was getting so difficult to live in Paris now and to get food into the city that we discussed the possibility of moving the boys out to my place in Barbi-

zon, but it seemed still to be too risky unless conditions became absolutely impossible in Paris. With the July heat and the lack of hot water and soap, the stench in the *métro* and other places where you came into close contact with people had become almost unbearable.

Later on that Fourth of July I got out of the *métro* at the Place de la République and witnessed the disorderly exodus of the German WACS who had occupied the Hôtel Moderne. They had changed their uniforms for civilian clothes and hurried into *camions*, begging officers to include extra suitcases. The French workers in the neighborhood stood around and jeered at the panicky Nazis. German soldiers went into the Hôtel Moderne with axes and wantonly smashed everything in sight, including the plumbing. It was my first sight of German panic, and it was some preliminary satisfaction for the misery and horror they had caused all of us in our own exodus four years before.

That night I got back to Barbizon, exhausted, and went to sleep in my house on the plain. During the early hours of July 5, I was awakened by a terrific explosion near by. Then I heard the rapid fire of machine guns and all was still. There were no planes overhead, and I wondered what it was all about. Next day the *garde champêtre* told me that the Germans had installed anti-aircraft emplacements in the woods next to my house. That night I went to bed as usual, and at one-twenty in the morning the anti-aircraft explosions began with such force that I was almost thrown out of bed. A mobile anti-aircraft unit was operating within fifty meters of the house. Ondie was quivering with fright. I grabbed

her and we left the house and crouched between two enormous boulders which made something of an abri. I held Ondie's mouth to prevent her from barking and attracting the Germans. Waves of English bombers were flying over us, and the pretty coils of silver paper to disrupt radar were falling from them like twirling rain. The night was clear and starlit, and I could see the silhouettes of the planes as they passed between me and the stars. I heard heavy bombs falling in the distance, and behind the house the German gunners were jabbering excitedly. Suddenly I saw an English plane burst into flames and zigzag to earth. It seemed to be falling between Barbizon and Melun. The German gunners screeched with delight. A few seconds later another English plane fell to the southeast. Bits of flaming stuff broke from the plane as it did a dive and fell into the trees in the forest. This horror looked very close, but I learned later that it had fallen twenty kilometers away. This second plane hit the ground with a terrific explosion and turned at once into a white light, brilliantly illuminating the whole countryside. I could not see how any boys could get out of those planes alive, and my heart was sick with anxiety. I was also afraid that they had not had a chance to drop their bombs and feared sudden explosions that would blow us all up. Antiaircraft in back of my house kept firing until the last English plane had passed over the area. Then Ondie and I went back into the house.

Early next morning I went to the house in Barbizon and found Nadine just as upset as I was. She had seen one of the planes go down, and she told me that the Germans

were out in their motorcycle sidecars, searching the entire neighborhood for survivors. Pouillot, the woodcutter, came in and told me that he had been to Chailly and had seen the remains of one of the planes that had fallen in a field near the edge of the forest. People there claimed that since no bodies were found near the plane, the Germans realized the crews must have bailed out. There was no news as yet of the second plane, for that had fallen farther away.

At about ten-thirty that morning Louis, the farm worker, came to my house. Nadine thought that he had come for our cigarette butts, which we saved for him, and told him that we were now reduced to smoking them ourselves. But he insisted on seeing me at once. When I came down from upstairs where I had been taking a bath, Louis, who was very nervous, said, "I've got something that will interest you."

"What?"

"A *garçon*. He has red hair. He's over on the edge of the plain by the apple trees." Louis told me that he had found the aviator when he went out early in the morning to look in his rabbit snares. While we were talking, Kay Devigne came in. I told her Louis' story and suggested that it would be much less conspicuous if she went with Louis to get the flier and brought him to my house than if I did. I gave her a trench coat, an old cap, and a market basket to use to disguise the boy. She went off and came back about twenty minutes later, accompanied by Lorne Frame, a tall, slim boy whose Royal Canadian Air Force uniform was partially covered by my trench coat and whose red hair was tucked

under the cap. I greeted him and asked if he was hurt.

"No, just mad," he said. And he looked it. He glanced sullenly around him. He wondered what an American woman was doing there and was surprised that Kay had talked to him in perfect English. "But so many screwy things have happened in the last few hours, I suppose anything's possible," he said. I took his uniform and revolver and showed him upstairs where he could get a hot bath.

"We'll get you some lunch after your bath, and you'll feel better," I suggested.

Before "Red" Frame came downstairs again Marie Rode, who lived near by, rang the bell. She told me that she had found an English boy under a haystack in a field while she was out cutting grass for her rabbits. She had suddenly come on his face, and she kept exclaiming to me, "*Mais, comme il est beau!*" She told me the boy was then lying in sight of the house occupied by the Sumes family, with whom Pierre Laval used to stay when he came to Barbizon week ends. "I don't think we can move him now without being seen," Marie said. I scribbled a note to the boy, telling him that we would come for him later, gave her some hard-boiled eggs and a piece of cheese to take to him, and told her to pick up a bottle of wine or beer at Alf Grand's on her way back to the flier's hiding place.

When "Red" came down from the bathroom, I told him that we had found another boy but could not go for him until after dark. He thought the fellow must be one of his crew. "Red" was too shaken to eat much. He told me that this had been his thirteenth mission and that they had hit

the Villeneuve-Saint-Georges railroad yards on the nose. He was flying a Lancaster, and there were seven men in his crew. He had got only a few seconds away from the target when a shell from a German fighter hit his plane. He was the pilot, and he tried to keep the plane righted while the others worked at putting out the fire. Their instrument board and two of their motors were shot away. He kept the plane going as best he could and gave the sign for the crew to bail out. After it looked to him as if all the boys had left the plane, he started to bail out himself and found that his foot was caught in the gear, but he finally managed to parachute down when the plane had dropped to what he figured to be about 1200 feet from the ground. He landed just on the edge of the forest. He had with him the silk RAF map each flier carried, his compass, and his flashlight. After burying his parachute, he wandered around in the forest in the dark for what seemed to him like hours and found himself back near his still-burning plane. He got away from that incriminating evidence again, and at daylight he saw some peasants in a field but did not dare go up to them. Instead he climbed into a tree and kept his eye on them. Louis came along, looked up into the tree, and smiled at him. "Red" decided that he was friendly and came down. Louis showed him on his map where he was and made him understand that he should stay in the tree until Louis could go for help.

At about three o'clock that afternoon Bellanger, the farmer from Achères, arrived at my house. The sweat was pouring down his face. Bellanger was a tall, gangling French

farmer, about fifty, who looked something like a Texan. He was dirty, for he had hurried over on his bicycle directly from work in his fields.

"There are two boys in the forest near my place, *Madame*," he told me. "They are in a terrible condition, burned, with blood all over them. I think they are dying. You'd better come as soon as you can. The Boches are searching all around the neighborhood, and I don't dare move them from the woods."

I knew that "Joe" Louarn, the nurse, was at the Cohns, and I decided to ask her to go with me. I got my little box of bandages and cotton. Bellanger told me that the lip of one of the boys was badly ripped and that he had begged him to sew it up but that he couldn't, so I took along a needle and thread.

"Joe" Louarn, Bellanger, and I pedaled the twenty kilometers as fast as we could go. En route we passed six German patrols, but they did not stop us. Bellanger led us into a place in the forest near the house of Caillaux, a *garde forestier*. The Germans had already searched Caillaux' house twice. The two boys were lying hidden in the woods, and their uniforms were caked with blood. I bent down and kissed them. Don Steepe, who had his prayer book and his rosary by his side, had a big gash in the back of his head, there was an open cut on his forehead, all the hair was burned from the back of his head, and his upper lip was hanging down. There was also a burn on his arm. As I bent over to comfort him, tears came from his eyes, and he squeezed my hand hard and assured me that he wasn't wor-



ried so much about his wounds, but that his brother had been shot down by ack-ack the week before over the Normandy beachhead, and he was afraid the shock of that loss and his being reported missing would kill his mother in Canada. The flier lying next to him, Dannie Murphy, said, "Come on now, skipper, I feel pretty sour, too. I've got Mary and two kids." Dannie's left leg was broken, and it had swollen to twice its normal size. He had third-degree burns on his legs, and his left hand was burned through. In addition he had cuts in various places.

I told them that we were going to take them into Cailaux' house and then move them to my place as soon as we could. With the help of Bellanger, "Joe" Louarn and I got them into the near-by cottage and started to dress their wounds. While we were boiling water and cleaning their wounds, Bellanger walked up and down outside, watching for German patrols. The boys carried fine first-aid kits, with morphine for hypodermics, salves for burns, and an oilskin covering with disinfectant powder inside to put on cuts and burns to ward off infection. We washed their wounds as best we could with alcohol, and Dannie almost fainted twice while we worked, but neither of the boys complained about their suffering. I put four stitches in Don Steepe's lip with my needle and thread.

After we had finished our first-aid, we had to put the boys back in their hiding place in the forest. The *garde forestier* did not dare risk keeping them in the house. He gave them two quilts, and I assured them that by morning I would make arrangements to get them over to Barbizon.

We didn't dare give them morphine, because we didn't want them to be groggy or groan with pain and give away their hiding place to the Germans, who were roaming around the forest in search of them. There was a reward of 10,000 francs a head to people who turned in fallen aviators, and Bellanger told us that he suspected another *garde forestier* in the neighborhood of being a collaborator. Caillaux brought the boys eggs and bread, and they had water canteens. It was now dark, and we reluctantly left the boys in the thick woods. "Joe" and I pedaled back to Barbizon as fast as possible. It was after curfew time, and we got back home at about eleven-thirty, exhausted with physical labor and emotion. Fortunately for us we met no German patrols en route.

When I got home, I found "Red" still disgusted with his fate, but when I told him about the other two boys, he figured that he had a lot to be thankful for.

"Now," I told Nadine, "we've got to get the boy in the haystack." I took the trench coat, and Nadine and I went over to Marie Rode's house. I told Nadine that if we met any German patrols we should giggle and act a little drunk, and then make for home as fast as we could. The Rode house was dark. We held on to the bell on the gate so that it would not clang and tapped on the windowpane. I called out my name softly. Marie's husband got up, put on a feeble light, and came to the door in his nightshirt. I told him that I had come to get the boy in the haystack, and he told us to come in. Marie popped out of bed, and said, "He isn't out there, he's right here in the house. I just couldn't

leave him lying out there in the cold and the dark." Their house was a small two-room dwelling, and I didn't see any flier. "He's in bed with Mama," Marie explained.

In the next room I saw Marie's old mother lying in her big feather bed, propped up with pillows. Her toothless, wrinkled face was beaming. Next to her was lying a young boy, sleeping like a baby, and without any clothes on. He didn't even wake up when the lights were turned on. I bent over him, shook his shoulder, and said gently, "Come on, honey, wake up." He woke, shook his head sleepily, and said, "Who are you?" After a bewildered look, he added, "I don't get it. I go to bed with Grandma and wake up with you. For cryin' out loud, it's sure funny weather!" He was a Canadian boy named Bill Watson.

While Bill was dressing, we walked into the other room and I thanked Marie and her husband for all they had done, warning them against talking to anyone about it. Marie had found an American flier six months before, but a collaborator who also saw him had denounced him to the Germans for the 10,000-franc reward. Marie, who was about fifty and had only one tooth left in her upper gum and one in her lower, told me happily that she hoped to find another flier next day because all good things came in threes.

Bill Watson came out of the next room in his blue Canadian uniform. I told him to go back and say *au revoir* to Grandma, who was sitting up in bed, looking proud of herself but forlorn. Bill's uniform was still covered with hay, for he had been lying all day long under the haystack. I told Marie that I would be sending him away soon, for I didn't

want too many people to know that I was going to have to hide the boys in my house. We put the trench coat on Bill, and he, Nadine, and I linked arms and walked quietly down the Grande Rue, which at that hour after curfew was lifeless.

As soon as "Red" got a sight of Bill, he ran up and they hugged each other. Bill Watson was the navigator of the Lancaster "Red" had piloted. We put the two of them to bed in Nadine's room in the little house where there were twin beds. Then I went over to Robilliard's garage and woke him up. I told him that I hoped that this would be the last favor I would have to ask him, but I needed his help badly. I told him that there were two badly wounded fliers in the forest below Achères and asked him to go with me in his truck in the morning to fetch them. Otherwise I would have to get a cart and horse, the trip would take at least eight hours instead of the twenty-five minutes we could do it in with his truck, and the risk would be all the greater. Robilliard was frightened. He had a family; he had been stopped three times that day by German patrols, who had looked inside his truck. "As much as I want to do it, *Madame*," he said, "I don't see how I can." I told him that I could understand his reluctance and suggested that he sleep on it, and if he should decide to take the risk, to let me know by eight in the morning, because if he couldn't manage it I would have to bicycle to the Pouteau farm early to see if I could borrow a horse and cart.

I went to bed on the divan in the living room, for Nadine was sleeping in my room, but I found it hard to sleep. The

exhaustion and excitement of the day had left me too tired and worried to get to sleep quickly, and I kept thinking of the two boys, wounded and burned, lying in the damp forest all night. A drizzling rain had started to come down.

It seemed as if I had just dozed off when I heard the bell ring. I looked out of the window of the salon and saw Robilliard at the gate. It was full daylight. I said to myself, "Ça y est, he's going to do it!" Robilliard stuck out his firm, stocky hand and said, "Well, if we get it, we get it together, and it's *pour la France!*" He suggested that we go at noon, when there was little traffic on the road, and agreed to come back at quarter to twelve. We planned to load a trunk into his truck for carting Don, whose head wounds were too noticeable to permit his being seen.

Nadine made me some barley coffee, and I quickly got together some clothes for the two boys in the woods. I had promised Robilliard that I would have them ready near the main road when we got there after noon in the truck. The side road leading to Caillaux' place was sandy, and it wasn't safe for the peasants working in near-by fields to see a truck coming up that road where only horse carts came. I put two clean shirts, two pairs of pants, and two coats into the basket of my bicyclé. Those were almost the last men's clothes I had left in the house.

I pedaled over to Achères again, found Bellanger at his farm, and we went together to the house of the *garde forestier*. Callaux told me that he had visited the boys that morning, bringing them coffee, and that while they were stiff and uncomfortable, they did not appear to be too mis-

erable. When I reached them, hidden in the trees, I found that Dannie was burning with fever and his leg was swollen and felt hot. With the help of Bellanger and Caillaux, I dressed the boys in civilian clothes, stuffed the uniforms into my basket, and Bellanger and I went back to the main road. We agreed on a spot to place the boys, marked it with a branch from a tree, and I pedaled rapidly back to Barbizon to pick up Robilliard and his truck.

On the way I passed Germans two or three times, but they did not stop me. At the crossroads between Milly and Arbonne the Germans had a control. Here German soldiers were out in the middle of the road. I had to find out whether this was a permanent control, because, if so, it would be dangerous for us to bring the boys past it in a truck. Much as I disliked stopping with a couple of Royal Canadian Air Force uniforms in my bicycle basket, I drew up at a small café just beyond the crossroads and asked the woman who ran it, whom I knew, whether the Germans were a permanent control group. She said they were part of a convoy passing through, part of which had been lost, and they were merely waiting for it.

On the way back to Barbizon I made up my mind to ask May de Gesnes whose house was up the lane in back of mine, to take the two wounded boys and put them in the studio in her courtyard, which was far enough from the main street to prevent passers-by from noticing them. I thought it too risky for me to keep four of them in my own house, and besides, I didn't have any more empty beds. I stopped at the de Gesnes' house, explained the situation

to May, who agreed at once to take the boys in, and we arranged for her to leave her back gate open so that Robilliard could drive in quickly.

Robilliard was in front of my house with his truck when I got there. We shoved my big trunk into the back of the truck and dashed off for Achères again. En route we met the German convoy but went right on and were not stopped. Nevertheless, Robilliard didn't like the looks of things when he saw two German soldiers on guard at the crossroads between Milly and Arbonne.

When we reached the top of the hill near the side road, Bellanger stepped out from behind some trees. Robilliard quickly turned his truck around. I lifted up the lid of the trunk, and we put Don into it. Then we got Dannie with his swollen leg into the front seat beside Robilliard. His leg was hurting badly. We put the trench coat over his lap so that no one would see his bandages. Then we started down the main road with Bellanger and the garde crying and throwing kisses after us. Robilliard, perspiring freely, gripped his wheel tightly. I was sitting in the back of the truck on the lid of the trunk, dressed in my shirt and shorts. It was a scorching July day, and I felt sorry for Don cooped up in the trunk, but there was no help for it.

When we got to the crossroads, one of the German soldiers held up his hand for us to stop. He looked in back of the truck and said, "Was ist?" I told him in French that we were moving and half got off the lid, indicating willingness to let him examine the trunk, but he seemed more interested at the moment in a woman's legs and said, "Nein, ganz

gut," and we drove on. By the time we got to the de Gesnes house we were all shaking with the strain of our ordeal. Robilliard drove as near to the studio as possible and he and I carried Dannie, with his arms around our necks, into the room.

The studio gave on to a lovely apple and cherry orchard. The birds were singing, and the atmosphere was as tranquil as any convalescent could want. We got the boys into beds. They wanted to say something to thank Robilliard but could find no French words. He kept shaking his head as he looked at them in amazement and saying, "*Ils sont des enfants, des enfants!*"

I went to Robilliard's garage and telephoned to Dr. Philardeau in Fontainebleau. I told him over the phone that I could not come to Fontainebleau for my *piqûre* and asked if he would come quickly to Barbizon as I was feeling very badly. He agreed to come at once, for he knew that I had no appointment for a *piqûre* and must need him urgently.

Dr. Philardeau was a man about fifty with seven children. I had met him first at Alf Grand's place when he was taking care of Mme. Grand, her daughter, and her grandchild. He had a fine, thin face and great gentility. About nine months before, a flier from Texas had fallen on the edge of the Forest of Fontainebleau. He had eighteen perforations in his intestines, his whole rectum had been shot away, and his body was ripped from crotch to navel when he fell into a tree. One of the guards of the forest had taken him to Dr. Philardeau's clinic in Fontainebleau. Philardeau was performing an emergency operation on the American when the



Germans walked in to arrest him for harboring a fallen flier. He explained that the man had been brought in in an unconscious state and was dying. The Germans could see for themselves that this was so, and they left a guard over the American flier, whom Dr. Philardeau managed to keep at his place for more than four months while he was recuperating. The Germans realized the Texan was too ill to escape. At Christmastime the children of Fontainebleau had taken up a collection for the Texan and brought him presents of cigarettes and bits of chocolate. I went over to see him at that time and saw his bed piled with these little gifts. He was afraid of everyone but Dr. Philardeau, and when I asked him questions about himself, he said in his Southern drawl, "Just let me hear a little English, honey, but please don't ask me any questions." In addition, Dr. Philardeau had often taken bullets out of resistance men when they were wounded and had nursed back to health a Canadian flier, dropped for sabotage work, when he got pneumonia.

Dr. Philardeau arrived at my house in his car in less than half an hour. I introduced him to "Red" and Bill and took him up the lane to see Don and Dannie. He sewed up Don's lip gently and so efficiently that only a small scar showed afterwards, and he dressed Dannie's leg and treated the cuts and burns on both of them. He put some medicament on Dannie's badly burned hand, so that the skin would graft itself over the hole. It was impossible to take Dannie for an X-ray of his leg, but Dr. Philardeau was sure that it was broken. The best he could do now was to heal it and Dannie could have it rebroken and set after liberation.

On our way back to my house, Dr. Philardeau told me that he was worried about my own health, and that unless I got some rest soon, I would collapse. I assured him that I could rest that night, since we had got all four boys into comparative safety, and that the strain of the past week had been unusual. Next day was Sunday, and I planned to rest, but in the morning Moulin and another resistance man arrived from Melun. They said that they had still another British flier who had fallen at the same time as mine. He had been hiding for two days in a summer camp for children but could be kept there no longer. I told them to bring him to my house.

An hour later in walked "Shorty," a sawed-off young Englishman from Croydon, outside London. He was dressed in reddish pants, raggedy, and much too big for him. He wore a ragged shirt and his own sleeveless sweater, full of holes, which he called his lucky sweater and wore on every mission. When "Shorty" walked into the room, where Bill and "Red" were sitting, they picked him up bodily and tossed him to one another. He was Philip Barclay, the engineer of their Lancaster.

We sat down to our first meal together in my enlarged household in the big studio, where the walls were very thick and sounds could not be heard in the neighboring houses. Bill and "Red" ate very well, but "Shorty" started fastidiously cutting off the fat around his lamb, and I told him he must eat it as butter was impossible to get in any quantity and he had to have his fats. When he thought I wasn't

looking, I saw him pass the chunk of fat to Ondie, but in a few days he was glad to get the fat himself.

It was now necessary for me to find food for the three fliers in my house, the two in May de Gesnes' house, and Nadine and myself, as well as keep a steady flow of food running into Paris for those in hiding there. This was a large order, but, fortunately, my chickens were laying very well and I had a big garden. Also, the neighboring farmers helped me, though they did not know my secret, with supplies of mutton, milk, and butter.

## II

It soon became apparent that too many people were in on our secret, and I decided that something had to be done to reduce the risk. There was no way of getting the boys into Paris and on the underground convoys with safety. Maria, May de Gesnes' maid, had recently returned from attending her father's funeral at Corez, and she was horror-stricken, for the Germans had burned down their little village and locked up most of the inhabitants as hostages in retaliation for Maquis deeds in the neighborhood. The Maquis were all over that part of the country, and some of Maria's own relatives had been arrested for furnishing them with food. She was so frightened by what she had witnessed in her home town that she had lost her courage, and she was afraid to serve Don and Dannie. Because of this, May de Gesnes was getting worried about keeping the boys much longer.

Moulin, of the resistance forces, came to see me a short time after the fliers had come to stay with me and with May de Gesnes. When he heard the whole situation, he suggested that the boys should all be sent to join the Maquis. I held out firmly against this, because the boys were in no physical condition for the guerrilla warfare and hunted existence in the Maquis, and I reminded him that we had strict orders from England that fliers were not to be put into the Maquis bands because so much effort had been put into their expert training and because they were needed back in England. I told Moulin that I intended to move them soon and that I was making my arrangements. He was satisfied and said that he had merely suggested the Maquis as a way out of our difficulties.

I had arranged with Nadine and the boys means of escape in case the Germans ever came to search our house. We always kept a ladder at the back wall of the garden so that the boys could make a run for the forest. I was sure that Nadine or I could always keep whoever came to the locked front gate there long enough to enable the fliers to get away. Whenever anybody rang the bell at the front gate, each of us had our routine tasks. One of the boys picked up the cards, if they were playing cards, and hid them. Another took off the extra plates and the others got rid of clothing and other evidence of their presence. All had trained themselves so that within a matter of seconds they could get the room looking like the innocent habitat of two women. Nadine always went to the window to see who was at the gate, and I went to the gate, while the boys disappeared quickly into the woodshed

in the garage. Even if it was someone we knew well, the boys remained hidden in the garage. The only people who were permitted to visit them were our few closest friends, Marion Greenough and the Devignes, who always tapped on the window instead of ringing the bell.

In the house next to mine, overlooking my garden wall, lived a couple named Bouvie. Bouvie worked in an office in Dammarie and commuted every day on his bicycle. They were a quiet, middle-aged pair of patriots, who used to talk with me when we worked in our respective gardens and always expressed pro-English and American sentiments and were ardent de Gaullists. Bouvie had told me that he wanted to do resistance work and asked if I could obtain a contact for him. I knew that the Bouvies could see without much difficulty a lot of what was going on in my house, and I decided that the best thing to do was to take them into my confidence, for I was sure of them. I told them that I had aviators in the house, and they were delighted to be helpful and consented to hide their uniforms in their house. I warned them that if the Germans ever came to search my place or to ask about me they must deny knowing me and must never get involved in the dangerous situation themselves. The Bouvies also offered to keep an eye out for German patrols and warn me if they seemed to be coming to my house.

The two boys at May de Gesnes' house were now getting along well enough to be moved. Dr. Philardeau agreed with me that it would be safer to bring them all into my house and pretend to the neighbors that they had gone away. I

called a council of war with Nadine, "Red," Bill, and "Shorty," and told them I was going to give the de Gesnes family and everyone else the impression that the boys were leaving Barbizon. I decided that the best way to do it was to give a farewell tea party for them at the de Gesnes house.

I made a yellow cake with the aid of my *Boston Cook Book*, and at four o'clock on the appointed day, about five days after the boys had arrived in Barbizon, we went up the lane to the de Gesnes' studio. There was only a short exposed place outside my garden wall where anybody passing by could watch someone going from my place to May de Gesnes' house, but we watched out carefully for passers-by. When we got into the studio, I introduced the three fliers who had been living in my house to the two at May de Gesnes'. They had been in different planes, had left for their missions from different flying fields in England, and had never met. Marion Greenough arrived in the pedal car which she had bought in Paris after she broke her leg at the beginning of the war, and which the boys christened "Barbizon Jeep." She brought some of her precious tea with her. Soon afterwards Robert and Kay Devigne and "Joe" Louarn arrived. In the studio May de Gesnes' mother sat in one of the rocking chairs she had brought with her from the United States about fifty years before. The lovely old lady, dressed all in white, sat rocking back and forth while the boys sang songs for her. In addition to *Pack Up Your Troubles* and *Tipperary*, which May de Gesnes had sung in a canteen during the last war, the boys gave a rendition for

the old lady of *Mairzie Doats*, which was quite confusing to her.

After the festivities were over, I told Don and Dannie that I had news for them, that they were going to shove off that night in a truck which would arrive from resistance headquarters. May looked very much relieved; the old mother looked sad; and Don and Dannie looked worried. Then we went out into the orchard to pick cherries, and the boys started a cherry battle, while I could only think of the nice clean shirts I had laundered for them for the tea party.

Later that night May brought Don and Dannie to my house. Each had a little package with a souvenir May's mother had given him, and a clean shirt and a box of food for the journey. May lingered, intending to remain until the truck arrived, but toward midnight I told her that she must go now as I had promised the resistance people that no one would be present except the boys and myself. "Red" and Bill had explained the ruse to Don and Dannie while I was saying good night in the garden to May de Gesnes. We all felt better now that we were all together in one place. We put a large mattress on the floor for Bill and "Shorty," put Don and Dannie in the twin beds upstairs, while "Red" slept on the davenport in the little salon and I used a couch in the little room off the kitchen.

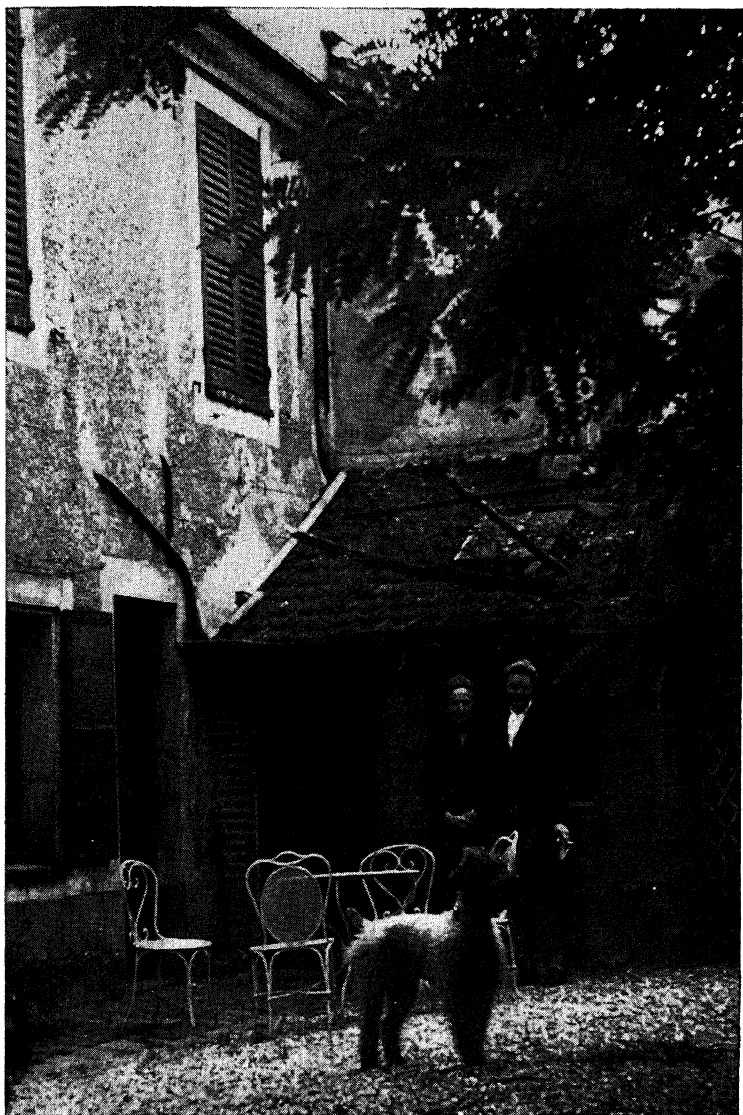
We soon settled down to routine in our household in hiding. At least every two days I had to go to the Pouteau farm for mutton, lamb, and milk. As it was hot weather, the meat would not keep very long. The business of scroung-

ing for food, tending our own animals and garden, and cooking three meals a day for five young appetites took every moment of my waking hours and tired me so that I found it hard to eat my last meal. The boys helped by preparing vegetables, washing dishes, and making beds. Our laundry problem was a big one, and Nadine attended to that. I was horrified, however, to come home one day and find five shirts, five shorts, and five pairs of pajamas billowing beautifully and revealingly in the wind from a line in our courtyard. I threatened to wring Nadine's neck if she ever did anything like that again, and she hurried outside to take in the incriminating laundry, which we kept thereafter in the upstairs bedroom and bath. I managed to get the boys cheap razors in Paris and bad razor blades, and it was possible for us to heat enough water for two hot baths a day.

The boys usually got up late, and I encouraged that, for when they were in bed they were quiet. Then they would come straggling into the kitchen, where the woodstove was always going, and heated up barley coffee and milk. Nadine had learned to make muffins out of whole wheat and goose grease, and sometimes we had eggs. We had our heavy meal at midday with rabbit meat, mutton, or lamb when we could get it.

One morning I told Nadine that we had to kill a rabbit. "We don't have to do that any more," she said. "We have five men in the house. I'll get my Guillaume to do it." Bill Watson was her favorite. When the boys came in for breakfast that morning, I explained that Nadine wanted them to kill a rabbit for us. "Let's not have rabbit today,"





*Olympe, another neighbor, with Drue Tartière in courtyard of  
Villa L'Écureuil, Barbizon*



*Mme. Olga Christol, who hid thirty-nine Allied fliers in her Paris flat*



*Drue Tartière with Mary Rode and her eighty-four-year-old mother, who helped rescue and hide an RAF flier*

one of them suggested, and the others agreed. I told them it wasn't for today but tomorrow. "We don't want rabbit tomorrow, either," they agreed. Nadine turned to me and said, "*Mon Dieu, ils ne sont pas les braves hommes, quand-même!*" And she added, "They can fly in the night in those big airplanes to bomb Germany, but they are afraid to kill a rabbit!" We teased them but could not persuade any of them to do the job we had been doing all during occupation. While Nadine and I went into the courtyard with the big round club we used to hit the rabbit behind the ears, the boys dove onto the davenport and put pillows over their heads to hide the sound of the squeals.

In the afternoons the boys wrestled in the enclosed courtyard, did setting-up exercises, or baked themselves in the sun. They enjoyed detective stories, *Gone With the Wind*, Rebecca, Duff Cooper's *Talleyrand*, and other recent books Marion Greenough brought them from her library and some of the many books I had in the house. Marion Greenough, whom we continued to let in on our secret, used to come often in the late afternoons to play bridge with the boys and usually beat them. Marion supplied some soap to keep us clean.

The boys took to watching behind the shutters to see the passers-by on the Grande Rue, and they got to know most of the people of Barbizon without ever having met them. They had to be restrained from whistling after the young girls, even softly.

The five youngsters took to calling me "Mom," and before long I began to feel like their mother. One afternoon,

looking up from his bridge hand, one of the twenty-year-olds said, "Gee, Drue, if you were only ten years younger and I were ten years older, what a couple we would make!" The boys didn't like my having to work so hard for them, but there was no help for it. It was too risky to let them work in the garden.

Nadine and I picked up their RAF and Canadian slang, and almost everything that was to happen or had happened soon became a "do." Whenever Nadine or I made a particularly good dish, we were told that it was "bang on," and whenever they wanted to express a threat they told us, "I'll give you the chop!"

The nights were trying because the German patrols went past the Villa L'Écureuil, carrying submachine guns, on their regular round every couple of hours after nine o'clock. They passed up the Grand Rue and then turned along the lane to the right of my wall. One night the patrol troops knocked on the Bouvies' door, and I thought this was the night we were going to get it. There was no light in the Bouvie house, and Bouvie and his wife did not answer the knock. Before long the Germans walked away. Next day I got the boys' uniforms from Mme. Bouvie and hid them under the wood in the garage, for I didn't want to take any chances in case the Bouvies were searched.

I went into Paris on Bastille Day, loaded down with food, for Mme. Olga Christol had written me that she was entirely out of provisions for the aviators in her house. I took the opportunity of calling on my friends, Tudor Wil-

kinson and his wife, and got two suits of clothes and a pair of men's alligator-skin shoes. I also had to get cigarettes for the boys in Barbizon and for myself, since we hadn't a single one left. I called on Jean Maillard at his office behind the Madeleine. I told him about my new batch of aviators, and he asked what I needed. I told him cigarettes and potatoes. His secretary telephoned to her brother, a resistance man named Crocher, and within fifteen minutes he arrived with fifty packages of English cigarettes and twenty of Gauloises. Crocher was a stocky Frenchman with a tough, confident manner. He also arranged to have 200 pounds of potatoes delivered to me in Barbizon next day.

I caught the six o'clock train back to Melun, and when we arrived at Villeneuve-Saint-Georges, which I hadn't seen since the boys in my house had hit it, the train had to crawl through on a temporary trestle. The whole junction, one of the biggest marshaling yards outside Paris, was ripped up. The warehouses were all burned out, boxcars lay in a mad jumble, and locomotives, too, were twisted and lying on top of one another, looking like obscene monsters. Débris was strewn around everywhere. Hundreds of Frenchmen, part of the Nazis' forced-labor gangs, were filling in big bomb craters. I watched them as they lackadaisically took a shovelful of earth, put it in the hole, and then, when the German guard wasn't watching, took it out again. The Germans in our train were clearly given to understand where French sympathies lay, despite the destruction in their own

country. French passengers looked at the scene and beamed. "*Quel merveilleux travail!*" they exclaimed to one another. The only regrets one had were for the poor people who sat outside their ruined houses with the pitiful remains of their few possessions.

When I got home with the fifty packages of English cigarettes, I put them all out on the table, and the boys were overjoyed. We divided up the haul equally between the seven of us. The boys felt very proud of themselves when I described the results of their work at Villeneuve-Saint-Georges and told them that their mission had been so effective that trains had only been able to begin running through there again on July 13 after their attack of the night of July 5-6.

Next day Jean Maillard and Crocher arrived at my house with 200 pounds of potatoes, some more English cigarettes, three big cans of butter, six cans of stewed meat, a kilo of green coffee, fifteen kilos of sugar, three bars of chocolate, and three bottles of champagne. Though neither of them could speak any English, they and the boys got on at once. Jean Maillard gave each of the youngsters a big cigar, and the five of them with cigars sticking out of their mouths, trying to look grown-up, was a ludicrous sight. We opened the champagne and drank toasts to England, Canada, America, and France. Maillard also brought me a bottle of good brandy, which he whispered to me I must put aside for myself. After Maillard and Crocher had left, I felt much better, for I realized that we now had resourceful resistance men looking out for us and a place to appeal to for help and

advice. Next day I sent the canned meat, some of the sugar, and some of the cigarettes back into Paris for the aviators living at Mme. Olga's house.

### III

I AWOKE ON July 18 to find that Barbizon was filled with German troops. I told Nadine to go down to the creamery and find out what she could about the situation. She came back with the news that the Germans were requisitioning houses. I was alarmed at this and got the five boys up and dressed, ready to go. By this time there were German trucks, camouflaged, all around the forest. We decided that there was nothing for us to do but hang on and hope that they wouldn't enter my house. Later that day I learned that the Germans had merely asked the *garde champêtre* how many beds there were in each house and had taken his word for the number of inhabitants without searching. The *garde* told them that my small house had only two rooms in one building and a small storehouse in the other and that three people already lived in those two rooms.

I went over to the Pouteau farm that morning for food. When I arrived on my bicycle, the place was in an uproar. The kitchen was swarming with German soldiers. Robert Pouteau told me that they had arrived in the early hours of the morning and had shot open the big farm doors with machine guns. They were going into all the farms in the neighborhood with their guns in their hands and coming back with squealing pigs and screeching rabbits. Pouteau

told me that he could give me no meat that day because the Germans had taken everything, but he gave me four liters of milk. There were about sixty German soldiers billeted on his farm. On my way home I met Maria, May de Gesnes' maid. "How lucky *Madame* was to get rid of those boys!" she said. "We have fifty-two Germans on our property."

While the Germans were still in Barbizon, Giselle came out from Paris on her bicycle to tell me that she had to have a place to hide a Jewish family consisting of the young mother, the grandmother, and three small children, the oldest being three and a half. The father, a well-known Paris lawyer, had been locked up in the concentration camp at Drancy. There were no places available in Barbizon because, in addition to the Germans billeted there, the houses were filled with refugees from the bombings at Melun and Corbeil, and the Germans had begun fortifying Paris so strenuously that Parisians were fleeing again into the suburbs. It seemed dangerous to put the family in my house on the plain, but as they were arriving on the afternoon bus and there was no other place for them to go, there seemed nothing else to do.

I went over and cleaned the house up a bit, put in a few pots and pans and waited for the Jewish refugee family to arrive. The lovely young mother was helpless in this deserted, lonely rural spot without running water, gas, or electricity, for she had been accustomed to a luxurious city life. The well was deep, and she was frail, so it was hard for her to draw water. I was able to help them at first, for



I still had to go over there every day to feed my animals, but as my work got more strenuous I turned my geese over to Pouteau and moved the other animals to Barbizon. As the family on the plain were living on false papers, they had no food cards, but we managed to get them food in the village, and I gave them the potatoes in my land on the plain, which Robert Devigne dug up for them.

We still had to get food into Paris for the aviators, and Giselle offered to come for it at least once a week, even if she had to make the long trip of sixty kilometers on her bicycle. Mme. Buisson brought me provisions often from Dammarie for the boys in Paris and those in my house.

Allied planes flew over Barbizon at some time every day during July and August. There were very large formations of them, and it sometimes took as long as half an hour for all of them to pass by. Whenever planes appeared, the boys dropped what they were doing and rushed out into the courtyard to identify the Flying Fortresses, Lancasters, Lightnings, Black Widows, and Typhoons. The news from Normandy was getting better every day, and the boys followed the campaign every night from the BBC nine o'clock broadcasts and with the aid of their RAF silk maps.

One night at the end of July the German patrols hung around in back of the house longer than usual. Earlier that night one of the patrols had caught Nadine sneaking back from May de Gesnes' house after curfew but had let her go. If they had asked for her papers, the house might have been searched while she was getting them. That day the Gestapo had arrested the proprietor of the Hôtel Les Char-

mettes and his wife, and we did not know why. They had also taken up an old woman named Wagner who ran an antique shop near my house. The boys, lying in bed, heard me bawling out Nadine in French for her carelessness. They didn't know what I was saying, but they knew I was nervous. I had had a typhoid injection that day and was not sleeping well. I got up and listened to the soldiers in back of the house walking outside my garden wall in their heavy army boots. I finally got weary and went back to bed. I heard a tap on my door. "Red" Frame asked if he could stick his head in. It was now about four in the morning.

"You're worried, Drue, aren't you?" he asked.

"No, not particularly. It's this damned arm of mine; it's sore from the typhoid shots."

"You needn't tell me that," he said. "I've heard their damned boots going by. . . . Listen, Drue," he said after a pause, "have you ever tried praying?"

"Not particularly, but maybe this is a good time to start," I said.

"We were talking about it at lunch," "Red" said. "There isn't one of us that doesn't pray night and morning."

He went back to his davenport, and I felt better for his conversation. Soon afterwards I fell asleep.

Next day one of the resistance men from Melun rang my bell about ten in the morning. He told me that he had come to say good-by, as he and Moulin were going into hiding. Three of their companions had been caught by the Germans the night before in Melun.

"It's nice of you to call to say good-by," I said, "but do

you realize that it might get me into trouble? You've left your bicycle right outside in front of my house, and if they're hunting for you, they might come for me, too."

"Well, since the boys have left, you have nothing to worry about," he answered. Since I wanted no more suggestions about sending the boys to the Maquis, I had told the Melun resistance people that I had taken the boys into Paris.

"An American in this place is always suspect, and calls from resistance men might make the Germans inquisitive," I remarked. He left quickly.

On August 14, Jean Maillard sent his associate, Crocher, out to Barbizon with more cigarettes and six bottles of champagne for us to drink when the Americans arrived. Crocher said that he would try to get out to Barbizon again, but that it was getting more and more difficult every day in Paris, for the Germans had made preparations to defend the city, and the resistance forces were planning a rising for the day of liberation. He told me that the Germans had dug deep trenches in the Luxembourg Gardens and had put small cement blockhouses with very thick walls and openings for guns all over the city. They had surrounded the Place de la Concorde with barbed-wire entanglements. Apparently they were preparing to fight street by street in Paris, or at least that was the impression they were trying to give. Crocher told us that his chauffeur was working busily at turning out bottles with fluid explosives to hurl at the German tanks on the day of the rising.

Crocher's home in Brittany had been completely de-

stroyed in the invasion, but his spirits were still high. The boys called him "our gangster," and he always entertained them with tales of his exploits. Recently he had gone to Rouen to get some papers stamped by the German Gestapo official there. He knew the German was a heavy drinker, so he took along four bottles of cognac. Crocher, his chauffeur, and the German sat down in the Gestapo office and started to drink, but the chauffeur managed to pretend to drink so that he could keep sober and get Crocher out in a hurry when the bout ended. After Crocher and the German had polished off the first bottle of cognac, the Nazi took his shirt off and strutted around, showing his muscles. Crocher said that Germans when they got drunk loved to strip to the waist and show their muscles. Not to be outdone, Crocher ripped off his shirt and showed his muscles. After the second bottle of cognac Crocher thought the time had come to get his papers signed. He put four transportation passes for trucks under the German's nose, and he signed them unsteadily. Crocher told him then that he had to have a *laisser-passer* to get back into Paris that night, and without knowing what he was signing, the German signed that and four extra passes. Crocher, who enacted the scene vividly, with me translating for the benefit of the fliers, told us that by the time he had accomplished his mission, he was so unsteady himself that his chauffeur had to put him in his car, and he went out like a light, with the precious passes safely inside his pocket.

Crocher told us that on the day he visited us he felt very international. He had gone to Meaux early in the

morning in his little Citroën to pick up an American flier whose arm and cheek had been badly wounded and had taken him to a clinic in Paris. When he came out of the clinic, he found two German officers sitting in his car, arguing with his chauffeur and ordering him to take them to St. Cloud. When Crocher objected and showed his *laisser-passer*, they had pulled out their revolvers, and he had had to drive them to St. Cloud. Then he had gone to Jean Maillard's office in Paris to pick up an Englishman, who had been sent in by the Germans from the internment camp at St. Denis on a special job and had stopped off to see Maillard. From St. Denis he had come over with the cigarettes and champagne for me. "I start with an American," Crocher said proudly, "take on two Germans, get an Englishman, and now I'm with Canadians!"

#### IV

ON AUGUST 18, I woke the boys at five o'clock in the morning to see the famous German army in full retreat. I had heard the rumbling of trucks and wagons and the sound of many men's boots. I rushed up the outside stairway to Nadine's room, thinking the Americans had arrived, but then I heard the excited jabbering of German, and I knew that it was not an entrance, but an exit. The day was very warm, and it was just getting light. The Germans were making for the forest, probably to protect themselves from expected attack. One German soldier was frantically struggling with a team consisting of one mule and one horse. Whenever the mule

got out of line, the soldier tried fiercely to push him back into the traces. Most of the soldiers I saw were Czechs and men with Mongolian faces. The élite German troops had already retreated toward the defense of the fatherland. The remnants had their shirts off and looked grimy. Wounded men were lying helter-skelter in carts. Every kind of vehicle was in the disorderly retreat: farm carts, automobile trucks without tires, trucks with flat tires bumping over the road. Branches of trees were tied to the carts for camouflage. Civilian furniture was piled high on some of the vehicles, for the Germans were reluctant to leave their loot, and they had stripped the hotels and the farms of food and furniture. The people of Barbizon were watching the scene with smiles of satisfaction. The boys peeked out through the shutters of our two big windows; they wanted to yell and applaud but had to restrain themselves. Nadine and I began to weep with joy. "What are you crying about?" one of them asked. "It's too beautiful. You couldn't imagine anything more beautiful than this."

All that day we watched for the Americans to arrive, but all we saw was dive-bombing and heavy air bombardment in our neighborhood. The electricity had been shut off, so we had no radio news, for the dry cells in the radio I had in the house on the plain were worn out.

Herr Pat, the Gestapo man who lived up the street, was trying frantically to get a truck to cart away his furniture and other household effects, most of which he had stolen from Jews. He had already evacuated his wife and children. Bageuse, Pat's gardener, told me that he had offered as

much as 75,000 francs for a truck, but nobody would give him one. He had recently spent 25,000 francs on redecorating his house. It was not until two days later that he was able to get German transportation for his loot. He told Bageuse and his servant that he would be back in two weeks, to which their comment when they reported it to me was, "*Tiens, tiens!*"

The Germans had plenty of artillery at Melun, and we were worried at the prospect of heavy shelling, for we had no deep shelters. On the twentieth we heard the sound of the big guns the Americans had set up in the direction of Milly and Etampes. In Barbizon and its neighborhood the remaining Germans began blowing up their ammunition dumps. One of their explosions almost blew out the windows in my studio. I thought the boys ought to dig a trench in the garden, but they laughed at me and said, "If a shell comes over, it won't make much difference if you're in a trench or the courtyard; we'll just lie flat on our bellies."

Late that afternoon Robert Devigne came rushing in, very excited. He had just heard from his gardener, who had been at La Chapelle de la Reine, that American tanks had arrived there. "Are you game to go down and see them?" he asked. I was eager to go, and he went back to his house to get his motorcycle. I decided to take "Shorty" with me, as he looked more like a kid than the Canadian boys and could pass more easily for a French boy. The others were envious of his chance to make the trip. We each got on a bicycle and hung onto Robert Devigne's shoulder. On the road we met half the population of Bar-

bizon on bicycles, and as we sailed along in back of Robert's motorcycle, they shouted, "If you find the Americans, bring them back!" We could hear the artillery shelling clearly, and dive bombers flew over our heads, but we were too excited to worry about danger.

When we got to the beginning of the road to Arbonne, we met the mayor of that town. He told us that there were thousands of Germans still in Arbonne, and that four of their tanks were guarding the road to Milly and La Chapelle de la Reine. He begged us to turn back. Robert whirled his motorcycle around, and we stopped the people from Barbizon, to tell them what we had heard.

All the next day, August 21, we heard heavy bombardment and shelling. Every time a car went down the Grande Rue we rushed to the windows, expecting the Americans. But it was always a German car. Late that Monday afternoon we saw another column of retreating Germans pass down the Grande Rue. One of their cars, full of officers, had a bad flat tire and almost ran into my gate as the driver lost control.

At six that evening Robert Devigne came in again and told us that the Americans had arrived at Villiers and were on the property of the Château de Fortoisseau, my father-in-law's former place. Gérard, the *forestier*, had seen the American armored columns and had told Devigne, "*C'est formidable!*" Robert told me he was going to take a look, and I begged him to take me with him, but he decided to make sure by himself first. In about half an hour he came back on his motorcycle. He was chewing a piece of gum



and gave me two American cigarettes. "They're there!" he said. "You've never seen anything like it in your life. There are five square kilometers filled with American tanks, big guns, and trucks." I grabbed my sweater and bicycle and was out of the gate fast. Robert's wife, Kay, jumped on the seat behind him, and I held onto his shoulder. Both of us were in shorts. It was very hot, and it was beginning to get dark.

We did the six kilometers to Fortoiseau quickly. There, spread out before us in the twilight as far as the eye could see, was a solid mass of American military might. Tanks, big guns, big trucks, and thousands of Patton's soldiers stood in front of us. In one's wildest dreams it would have been impossible to imagine that so much massive, magnificent equipment could have come ashore on those Normandy beachheads. The soldiers were getting ready to bed down for the night. Artillery fire from the German guns at Melun lighted the sky, and enormous fires from the ammunition dumps the retreating enemy had blown up illuminated the eastern horizon. American big guns were silent, for they did not want to give away their exact positions.

Robert slowed down. An American soldier jumped into the middle of the road and told us to halt. We stopped, and I went up to him and said, "Who do you think you're halting, buddie?"

"Cripes, what are you, an American?" he asked.

"I certainly am," I said, "and I take it you're one too."

He shouted to the other American boys who were scraping their mess tins and getting ready for bed in a big field

on the side of the road. We dumped our motorcycle and bicycle into a gully. "Hey, fellers, I've got an American," the soldier shouted.

We ran toward the soldiers and they toward us. Tears were streaming down Kay's face and mine. "It's wonderful to see you!" we shouted. A shell suddenly hit near by, and the soldiers grabbed us and put us in the shelter of a huge gray tank. One of them put his helmet over my head. We hunched down and started answering their questions about how an American and English girl happened to be there. We kept asking them where they were from, and I reveled in the old familiar names of states and cities. The soldiers emptied their pockets of chewing gum, cigarettes, and candy, and when one of them heard that Kay had two kids, he rushed back to a supply truck and got some more candies. Their commanding officer, a colonel in the tank corps, came up. He told us that he couldn't believe his ears when his men told him an American and English girl had arrived, and he said that he wanted to kiss the first American and English girls he had seen in France. He did so with formality.

The colonel thought it dangerous for us to return and suggested that we remain with his outfit for the night, but I told him that I had five British aviators in the house and had to get back. "We'll be in your section in about twenty-four to forty-eight hours," he said. "We're ten miles ahead of where we planned to camp tonight. We expected real resistance, but we haven't run into any in this neighborhood." We told him of two pockets of Germans between

La Chapelle de la Reine and where he was at Villiers, who were not very numerous and had only about three tanks each. "We don't care about them," the colonel said. "The fellows who are in back of us will take care of them." It was now quite dark, and we had to start back. The colonel sent some soldiers with tommy guns in a jeep to escort us as far as the crossroads where the road branched off from Perthes to Barbizon. They knew of a pocket of German snipers in a château facing the road. The soldiers shouted good-by to us and we to them as we left reluctantly for the night.

At the crossroads our escort had just left us when the German snipers began firing. Bullets hit the sand beside my bicycle, and the hot gravel that bounced up burned Kay's bare legs and mine. We saw the flash of fire from the wood where the snipers were hiding, and we thought it might be our last minute alive. Kay clutched her husband and said, "Please, God, think of my two children!" I was excited and started singing *Yankee Doodle*. "Shut up!" Robert suggested. "Do you want them to think we're the whole American army?" I was so happy at the arrival of the Americans at last that I didn't care if that moment was my last.

Robert put on full speed, we got past the snipers without being hurt, and arrived home exhilarated and shaken. When I walked into the house, I pulled out the chewing gum from my mouth in a long string to show the boys and Nadine that the Americans were there. They listened eagerly to our account of our experience.

Next morning I got out the five air-force uniforms and

started to mend the holes and press the blue jackets and trousers. We picked hay out of Bill Watson's and sewed up the rips we had had to make to bandage Dannie and Don. Each boy got a great thrill at seeing his uniform come out of hiding again after about a month and a half of wearing nondescript, ugly clothes.

At about three o'clock that afternoon, August 22, someone reported seeing American tanks coming through the fields from Perthes and Cely-en-Bière. Robert Devigne and I decided to go out again and investigate. But when we got to the corner where the Barbizon road joined the main road, we ran into a column of retreating Germans. Our planes were flying overhead, diving and machine-gunning the Nazis and setting their vehicles on fire. We decided it was safer to retreat. So did the Germans, who tore down the Grande Rue, making for the cover of the forest. They got blocked in front of my house, and we were frightened that now, so near the end, we might get bombed by our own planes. Despite the danger, it was a satisfaction to see the Germans machine-gunned on the roads as they had taken delight in machine-gunning frightened refugees four years before. American artillery shells began to come over from the guns in the direction of Milly, but they did not get close to us that night. We were sure that the Americans would arrive in Barbizon by morning. We laid out the freshly pressed uniforms that warm August night and ate in the courtyard. We talked quietly until we were driven to bed by sheer fatigue.

Earlier that day I had gone to get Simone, the Barbizon

hairdresser, to cut the boys' hair. She was a small, pretty blonde about thirty with a turned-up nose. Her brother had gone into the Haute-Savoie with the Maquis, and when her younger sister was threatened with being taken to Germany to do forced labor, Simone had kept her in hiding in her shop. She was defiant to the Germans who dared to come into her place, and when they wanted to buy a lipstick or a compact, she would show it to them and then take it back and say, "It's sold, *m'sieur*." Simone cut the five fliers' hair that day, while the boys teased and pinched her. She was delighted to find the five surprise guests in my house. Occasionally, I had taken her into Paris to cut the hair of the fliers hiding there.

We were up early on the morning of the twenty-third. The boys started shaving and got into their uniforms. I had managed to get two blue shirts to replace those that had been burned, and they looked smart again in their light-blue air-force clothes. Robert Devigne brought his three-year-old son in, who stared at them wide-eyed and said, "But they're soldiers!"

About ten-thirty that morning we heard a commotion up the street near Robilliard's garage. An American jeep with a two-way radio going full blast was coming down the Grande Rue. Two American soldiers were in it, and everybody in town seemed to be running alongside, shouting and clutching at them. The five fliers in my house didn't wait to get out by the gate but jumped out the ground-floor window. The jeep pulled up in front of my house, and I came running out of the gate. The townspeople as well

as the American soldiers were surprised to see five boys in Royal Air Force uniforms emerge from the Villa L'Écureuil.

One of the soldiers in the jeep was First Lieutenant Charles Whipple, of Chicago, and the other was his driver, Bob Close. "What the hell's going on here?" Whipple asked. "Nobody told me the Canadians were in this neighborhood!" We explained briefly and I opened up the gate. Whipple and his driver drove into my courtyard. On his radio he reported to his headquarters that he was out patrolling. The inhabitants of Barbizon began to pour into the courtyard and hugged and kissed the two American soldiers and the five fliers. I told the crowd to come back at two that afternoon for a celebration and to drink a glass of wine with the boys.

About twenty minutes later a delegation arrived. They tacked up red, white, and blue streamers and put lanterns around the courtyard. A boy who could paint had made a canvas sign decorated with fancy wreaths and flowers. It read: "In homage to Mme. Tartière from all of Barbizon." They put this up on the door of Villa L'Écureuil and placed a big wreath of flowers around it.

My neighbor, Olympe, came in to help Nadine prepare the two ducks for luncheon with our first American guests. We also got out the six bottles of champagne Maillard had sent me for this day.

Charlie Whipple told me that he had come into Barbizon by a side road and was there by mistake. He was attached to Headquarters Battery, 7th Field Artillery, Observation Battalion, of General Patton's army. After he had

shaved and washed in my place he drove back to get his commanding officer, Captain Keith Chandler, to bring him back to lunch. By this time Patton's artillery had begun to set up antiaircraft batteries and heavy artillery in the fields around Barbizon and on the famous plain. Our luncheon party grew, for Charlie Whipple brought back not only his captain but Colonel Hudspeth, head of civil affairs at Fontainebleau.

While we were eating in the courtyard, French children began to arrive with big bunches of flowers. The father of my woodcutter, Pouillot, brought an enormous bunch of flowers, and tears streamed down his wrinkled cheeks as he greeted all of us affectionately. Marion Greenough arrived with some Vouvray she had been saving. The Americans brought real coffee, plenty of cigarettes, candy bars, and soap. Charlie Whipple gave Nadine and me each a lipstick and some hairpins. "They told us in England that this stuff might be useful," he said.

The French people began filling the Grande Rue. We hurriedly cleared the table, put out all the glasses we could find, and the crowd surged in, singing the *Marseillaise*. The whole courtyard was filled with flowers and covered with red, white, and blue ribbons. The fliers and the American soldiers lined up beside me, shook hands with everyone, and were hugged and kissed frequently. Almost every French guest carried a bottle of wine, champagne, brandy, or marc. The courtyard was so packed with people that one could scarcely move, and most of them were speechless with emotion. Some people had come from as far away as

Melun. They asked me to make a speech, and I got up on a chair and told them of the various inhabitants of Barbizon who had risked their lives so that we might save the British boys. I pointed out Robilliard, Louis, Marie Rode, and the de Gesnes family. Later that afternoon Bellanger and Cailiaux, who had helped save Don and Dannie, arrived from Achères, and Bellanger brought his daughter and niece. They wept and told me how they had prayed for us. Jacques Cohn and his wife Luce and the Jewish family who had been hiding in my house on the plain arrived to pay their respects. We had to sing the *Marseillaise*, *God Save the King*, and *The Star-Spangled Banner*.

That night the boys were weary and befuddled by the number and variety of drinks they had taken with their admirers. All night long we could hear the American artillery pounding Melun. GI's milled around the street in Barbizon. Next day Charlie Whipple and Captain Chandler returned. They told us we must report the Canadians and "Shorty" to headquarters at Fontainebleau so that arrangements could be made to send them back to England. I wanted to show them Paris before they left, but this proved impossible.

While we were having lunch, Mme. Bouvie came rushing in from the house next door. "They are going to shoot my husband!" she said to me. She was so hysterical that it took us some time to get a coherent story from her. She told us that someone in Dammarie had denounced Bouvie as the man who had caused the death of a Communist whom the Germans had shot more than two years before. A group of



men had come to the Bouvie house that afternoon, taken him in a car to Dammarie, and she heard that he was to be shot along with five others. "You can save him," Mme. Bouvie pleaded, "the Americans can save him!"

After he had heard her story, Lieutenant Whipple told me that in villages and towns all the way in from the beach-head he had seen Frenchmen punishing other Frenchmen they considered guilty. I decided to go at once to the American civil-affairs officials in Fontainebleau to see if they could do anything for Bouvie and at the same time report the five fliers to them. Charlie Whipple and Keith Chandler took me in their jeep, and Robilliard followed with Nadine and the boys in the old Renault which he had pulled out of storage after the Germans left town.

We drove along the road through the Forest of Fontainebleau, which was packed with American tanks, trucks, and guns under cover from bombing. When we arrived at Fontainebleau we found the American civil-affairs officials just moving into the former German Gestapo headquarters. The Germans had abandoned the place so fast that parts of their sandwiches were still lying around. Lieutenant Rey, who was in charge, told me that the five fliers would have to go back home as soon as possible but promised to leave them with me until August 26. He said that there was nothing the American authorities could do for Bouvie, because it was their rigid policy to permit the French to manage their own affairs except in cases involving the American forces, or affecting the military campaign. I decided to go over to Dammarie at once to see what I could do to per-

suade the French officials that Bouvie was the patriot I knew him to be.

Charlie Whipple and Keith Chandler took me in their jeep to Dammarie as fast as we could go over roads, we discovered later, which had not yet been inspected for mines. Dammarie was still under shellfire. There were no Germans left in the town itself, but they still held the other side of the Seine, and shells aimed at the American positions in the distance flew over our heads. When we drove into the town square it was swarming with people. It seemed as if there were about 2000 excited French men and women, and many of them were yelling. Sixty-two French women and girls accused of living with or otherwise collaborating with Germans were having their heads shaved. As each shearing was finished, the victim was passed along the gauntlet of men, who picked them up and spanked them on their bare bottoms, shouting at them, "Dirty whores!" and spitting on them. For Whipple and Chandler this scene was routine, for they had seen many kinds of summary justice carried out in the towns and villages they had passed through on the way in from Normandy. To me, it was new and frightening. When the crowd saw me come in with an armed soldier on either side of me, they shouted epithets at me, thinking I was a prisoner. I explained quickly that we were Americans, and suddenly realizing that this was their first contact with American soldiers, the crowd started yelling, "*Vive les américains!*"

We walked through the mob up to the steps of the *mairie*. The elderly mayor of Dammarie, who knew me,

greeted us enthusiastically. I told him that I had come to rescue Bouvie, and he told me that Bouvie was locked up in a cell in the town jail. As we walked up the steps of the *mairie*, I saw on my left in a bend of the building a long table with six Frenchmen, who were looking fierce. They were the judges of this people's court. On the opposite side of the building the head shaving was taking place preliminary to the shoving of accused collaborators into the angry crowd.

I was dressed in my green plaid skirt, a white shirt and suspenders. I went up to the judges' table and asked that they bring Bouvie out immediately and judge him in front of me, as I had a story to tell about him which might outweigh their evidence against him. I explained that I was not there to interfere with justice, which was their business, but to demand full justice, and asked that they bring out not only the accused but the man who had accused him.

"Who are you?" one of the judges asked. "By what right are you here?"

"I am Mme. Tartière, of Barbizon, a friend of the Buissons who live in your town, and who hid one of our aviators in their house for several days. The mayor also knows me." The mayor confirmed this statement. The judges decided to send for Bouvie, who appeared, white-faced and frightened. Then they sent for the man who had denounced him, but he was not to be found. The judges, however, had a dossier on Bouvie, and the accusation stated that it was alleged that he had denounced a man to the Germans as being a Communist in 1942 and that the Germans had

thereupon shot that man. There were a great many Communists in Dammarie, which was a busy industrial community. The judges maintained that Bouvie had been responsible for the death of a patriot. "*On dit! on dit!*" I shouted. "Where is your evidence? These allegations are not enough. They must be proved." I jumped on a chair and addressed the crowd. I told them that Bouvie had hidden the uniforms of my five fliers in his house, as well as their revolvers and ammunition. I told how he had watched every night for the Gestapo patrols, ready to warn us of danger. I submitted that this should count in his favor, and that it gave some reason for doubt that this kind of man went around denouncing people to the Germans. I pointed out that he could have got at least a hundred thousand francs from the Nazis for denouncing me, if he had been so disposed. "These two American officers," I said, pointing at Charlie Whipple and Keith Chandler, who stood beside me with their hands on the holsters of their small arms, "don't believe that you have enough evidence on the hearsay of a man who has disappeared to convict a man with a record as good as that." Charlie Whipple and Keith Chandler nodded their heads in agreement. The crowd was completely silent and listened carefully. The judges then started talking among themselves.

"Well, it's true there isn't much evidence," one of them said. Then they asked if the messenger had been able to locate the man who had denounced Bouvie, but he was nowhere to be found.

"Then, I am going to take Monsieur Bouvie back to

Barbizon with me," I said. The judges looked at one another. "Get him into the jeep," I said to Whipple and Keith. "*Merci, merci infiniment,*" I said to the judges and told Bouvie to follow the American officers. I shouted to the crowd, "*Hurrah for Bouvie! C'est un héros!*" The crowd cheered Bouvie, and as he passed through it on his way to the jeep several men grabbed him and shook his hand heartily. The crowd then shouted, "*Vive l'Amérique!*"

As we drove fast out of Dammarie, Charlie Whipple said, "It beat the movies!" Bouvie began to weep. We dropped him en route at a house where his wife was waiting with friends. Charlie Whipple and Keith Chandler found it hard to understand the fierce emotions suddenly let loose by the liberation against accused collaborators, but it was easy for me, who had lived for four years among Nazi stooges, to understand the impulse of the crowd to take justice into their own hands and make it quick. Unfortunately, there were many people who escaped justice, and there were undoubtedly instances of injustice caused by people who had personal grudges to square and denounced their neighbors falsely.

Later that day the fliers returned from their trip to Fontainebleau. They had spent some of their "crash" money, the thousand francs each boy carried in case he came down in France, on perfume for me and Nadine. Next day we were invited to lunch at Fleury with my friends Pierre and Carmen Colle, who lived on the property of the Château de Fleury. While the five fliers and I were waiting outside Robilliard's garage for him to warm up his old Renault,

André and Ruth Dubonnet came along. She came up to me and said, "Darling, how nice to see you!" and he tried to kiss me, but I held him off. The five boys in their RAF uniforms stood silently beside me. Ruth Dubonnet asked, "What's this?"

"These are my boys," I answered. "I've had them in the house for almost two months."

As they walked away to their shiny car, Robilliard spat and said, "Salauds!"

When we got to Carmen and Pierre Colle's house, they told me that the Dubonnets had been there and were terribly worried. "They knew you were coming to lunch, and Ruth thinks you owe her protection because she claims you wouldn't have got out of Vittel if it hadn't been for her influence. She wanted us to ask you to intercede for them because they think they may be arrested at any moment."

After lunch we took the boys through the château, which was owned by the Count de Gannay, and which the Germans had used. In the main hall were pictures of Hitler, Goering and Himmler. The RAF boys, with the Count's permission, began to do away with these graven images, and we all watched with pleasure as they tore up the pictures, being careful at Albert de Gannay's request to save the glass, which was so scarce. The boys also saved as souvenirs the good color photographs the Germans had hung up of some of their planes. Before leaving this beautiful château, the Germans had burned the fine old woodwork in the library and taken with them all medicines and Red Cross material. They had apparently not had time to blow

up the château itself, as they had threatened to do. At my father-in-law's former place, Fortoiseau, they had burned the building to the ground. Count de Gannay told me to tell the American occupying forces that the Château de Fleury was at their disposal if they needed it for billeting, and that it had plenty of bedrooms and bathrooms.

That night "Red," Bill, Don, Dannie, and "Shorty" had their farewell dinner with me and Nadine. We got Olympe, the girl next door, to do all the cooking and serving and we dined in the courtyard, opened the four bottles of champagne I had saved, and tried to be gay. But the gaiety didn't come off, and the champagne hadn't helped. Nadine suddenly burst into tears, and I, too, felt like weeping. In a desperate attempt to cheer her up, the boys began to sing *Mairzie Doats*. After the last bottle of champagne was empty, we gave up all effort to be gay. "It's almost harder to leave you than our mothers," Don Steepe said, when we finally got ready to go to bed. Nadine and I went to our beds and wept quietly. I could hear the boys walking around in the courtyard, talking quietly, and saw the flicker of their cigarettes.

Early on the morning of August 26 Lieutenant Preston, of G-2, came for them in a jeep from Fontainebleau. I wasn't able to bring myself to go outside to see them off. Nadine, May de Gesnes, Marion Greenough, and I stayed in the house and wept. "I seem to have made a funeral," Lieutenant Preston said as he bid us good-by.

"Maybe you can get along with one leaving a family," I said, "but it's hard to lose five at once." The boys drove off,

the house seemed at once desolate, and I began to feel the same kind of loneliness I had felt after my return to Barbizon from internment in the winter of 1942. Robert Devigne suggested that I try to get into Paris; we still had no electricity and therefore no radio news, but he had heard it was now liberated. He offered to take me into Paris on the back seat of his motorcycle that same afternoon, and I decided to go.

## V

WE BOUNCED along the road to Paris on Robert Devigne's motorcycle, and on the way American trucks and jeeps full of soldiers kept passing us. After we had gone about fifteen kilometers, we got a flat tire, and as it would take some time for him to fix it, Robert suggested that I try to hitch-hike into Paris. I hailed the next jeep that came along, and the soldiers took me in. On the way we were almost hit twice by shells coming over from Corbeil across the Seine. There were two artillery officers and their driver in the jeep, and they were interested to talk to another American in France. As we passed the Jardin des Plantes, we noticed that the whole gardens were filled with gasoline drums, tanks, trucks, and other captured German matériel. The American soldiers thought it a dangerous concentration of inflammable material. When we got to the Gobelins quarter, where so many of our aviators had been hidden, I noticed that many houses in the Rue Monge had been gutted, and that the street was full of débris. This had been a district



where the people were almost 100 per cent resistance. The Place de la Concorde was full of people, and we heard the rumor that General de Gaulle had arrived back in Paris and would march down the Champs Élysées and on to Notre Dame.

The two American artillery officers were visiting Paris for the first time, and they wanted to take some pictures. I decided to take them to Sarah Watson's Foyer International in the Boulevard St. Michel, where they could go up on the roof with their cameras and get some beautiful views. The Foyer looked out on the Luxembourg Gardens, where a fierce battle with remaining Germans had been fought the day before. Sarah Watson took us up on the roof, and we had no sooner got there when we heard shooting and could see the driver of our jeep crouched behind his car with his tommy gun. Two German snipers were firing from behind a hedge in the Luxembourg Gardens. We could see them clearly from our roof, but people on the street could not. Passers-by were dropping to the street as the Germans hit them, and several were killed. One of our officers ran downstairs again, got his tommy gun from the jeep, and picked off the two Germans from the roof, while Sarah Watson clapped her chubby hands happily and said, "I almost feel as if I had done it myself!" She had been the first of us to spot the Nazis.

As the American soldiers had to get back to their post soon, I decided to show them some more of Paris in a hurry and took them to call on the Tudor Wilkinsons on the Ile St. Louis, back of Notre Dame. While we were parking our

jeep in front of 18 Quai d'Orléans, where the Wilkinsons lived, a sniper's bullet whizzed over our heads. We backed the jeep around and parked it in the courtyard of the apartment building. Upstairs in the Wilkinsons' apartment we could hear the whizz and ping of bullets as we drank a glass of champagne with my friends. The American officers left, and Dolores Wilkinson's sister Eva went to the window to see what was going on in the street below. A bullet hit her in the stomach, and we took her to the hospital near by across from Notre Dame, using a stretcher improvised by Mario, the concierge.

Late in the afternoon the street shooting began to die down. I remained at the Wilkinsons' apartment for the night, and we had an early dinner and went to bed. They had put me on the top floor of their three-story apartment, which was the seventh floor of the building. The room was beautifully furnished in Gothic style and had a balcony overlooking the Seine. We had no electricity, and as I did not want to use the precious candle stub, I undressed in the dark, putting my clothes on a chair near by rather than hanging them in the closet in a far corner.

I don't know how long I had been asleep, but at about eleven o'clock I heard the sound made by the motors of German planes. I jumped out of bed and shouted downstairs to Tudor and "Don" Wilkinson, while I quickly pulled on my clothes, "Get up, those are Germans!"

"Don't be silly," Tudor called back. "They can't be Germans with the Americans here."

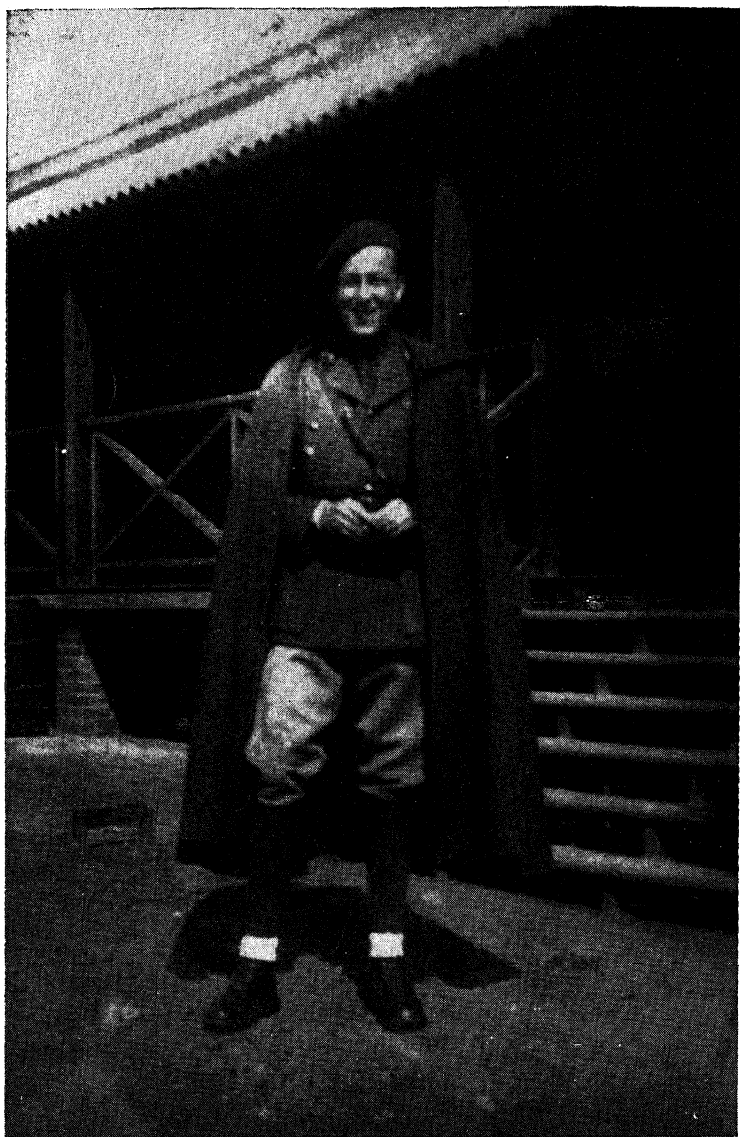
"I tell you those are Germans," I shouted back. I had



*Drue Tartière and the five fliers in the courtyard at Barbizon: Donald Steepe, Bill Watson, Drue, Ondie, Philip Barclay, Lorne Frame, Daniel Murphy*



*Liberation luncheon at Barbizon. In the foreground: Bill Watson, Drue Tartière, Lorne Frame, Lt. Charles Whipple, Ondie*



*Jacques Tatière in Syria*

just got my second shoe on when the first incendiary bombs hit us. One landed in my room, and I heard Dolores shriek from the floor below that the little salon was on fire. I looked out the window and saw that the kitchen, too, was on fire and that the floor below was burning. It seemed as if the whole house would burn down. Dolores shouted to me that there was sand in the fireplace in my room. I found an old umbrella stick and tried unsuccessfully to pry the incendiary bomb from the ledge between the balcony and my room. It was burning into the zinc on the balcony. I finally poured a sack of sand over it and smothered it. Then I ran downstairs and into the kitchen to help Tudor put out the fires there. By this time the whole end of the kitchen was burning, and Mario, the concierge, came rushing in with another bag of sand. A large number of incendiaries had hit the house. Three had fallen in the courtyard, another on the third floor, one in the little salon, three on the balcony in the big salon, besides the one on the balcony in my room. We didn't have enough sand, and Tudor threw a pail of water at the incendiary in the kitchen; the fire came at us like burning quicksilver and burned Tudor on the legs and arms, but did not hit me. I grabbed a big sieve for grain that was lying in the kitchen and managed to scoop up the small incendiary bomb and throw it from the window down into the courtyard. Then we ran into the large salon, where we put out three more incendiaries which were burning on the balcony, smothering them with sand. Just at that moment a big explosive bomb hit near Notre Dame, and water from the Seine splashed up into our faces. The Ger-

mans were bombing the Halle aux Vins and the Jardin des Plantes, where the fires from the gasoline and alcohol which I had passed earlier in the day were the greatest and most terrifying I have ever seen.

Dolores was struggling with another incendiary in the little salon, where the drapes had caught fire. I pulled them down, and the pole hit me and gave me a beautiful black eye. By this time I was so tense that I was digging my nails into the palms of my hands and thought I would go mad. This was the worst raid any of us had gone through in Paris, and we thought the Germans were going to destroy the city that night. They had moved out their antiaircraft, and the Americans had not yet had time to move much in, so there was little opposition to the Nazi planes from the ground and no fighter resistance. While we were at work in the little salon, Dolores got a heart attack, and we laid her on the floor in the big hallway while she tried to get her breath. Meantime the rods for the window awnings were melting with the heat, and I was afraid that the woodwork of the windows would catch fire.

Gasoline and alcohol fumes shot up high into the air and streams of fire were carried on the wind. Whole houses six stories and more high fell over in flames. We could see Montmartre burning in the distance, and there were big fires beyond the Gare de Lyon. It looked to us as if all Paris were burning. Firemen began to blast burning buildings near by, and just across the Seine we watched a battle between firemen and German snipers, who still remained in Paris. The Germans shot at the firemen, chopped the hoses,

shot holes in them, and killed many of the fire fighters. Bullets began to ricochet off the walls of near-by buildings, and recalling Eva's tragic experience that afternoon, I hastened to go inside, where our own fires were now under control. A sniper's bullet sang past me and lodged in the bathroom. I decided to get back to Barbizon next day and take Patton's artillery shelling rather than any more of this kind of thing. At about four o'clock in the morning the fire on the other side of the river was under control, but the sniping continued. We decided to go back to bed, but I thought it safer to drag my mattress onto the floor because the fine old high bed was too good a target. Exhausted, I slept until daylight. Hitler had given de Gaulle a warm welcome.

Next morning I went to call on my friend Picasso, who lived not far away on the Rue des Grands-Augustins, and found that though the neighborhood showed signs of fire fighting, his particular street had not been badly damaged and he was all right. He had been out on the streets during the sniping and seemed to have enjoyed it. From there I went to Sarah Watson's Foyer International. The streets were filled with GI's, many of them smeared with lipstick, and their tanks and jeeps were covered with girls, dressed in their best chintz, which in many cases, I realized, had been made from old draperies.

I went back to Barbizon on Robert Devigne's motorcycle Monday afternoon, August 28, to try to get a good night's rest, after one of the most turbulent nights of my whole life in occupation. When I got to my house, Nadine told me that "Red" and Dannie had hitch-hiked

back to Barbizon that day from Nemours to see me, as they were not scheduled to leave for England until the following day. Though I was sorry to have missed them, I was glad to avoid the emotional strain of another farewell scene. On my desk I found notes from them, sending love and telling me that we would meet again somewhere, some day.

Nadine brought me some supper to my bed. I arranged the mosquito netting over me and took three sleeping powders. I was in a deep sleep, when at exactly eleven o'clock German planes came droning over Barbizon. I pulled on my clothes again, screamed to Nadine to get dressed, and ran out of the house. "You're in full country," she said. "I don't know what you are worrying about; this isn't Paris." Whole flocks of German planes were circling overhead, and our anti-aircraft had opened fire on them as they flew to Melun to bomb the heart out of it. Nadine and I stood in the courtyard and watched the explosions over Melun, while I realized that, city or country, there was still no chance of peace for us. I went back to bed, and the worst fit of hysterics I had ever had in my whole four years came over me. It seemed silly now that the end was so near, but the accumulation of distress, despair, fear, and loneliness seemed too much for my overwrought nerves. Next day I told Nadine that I had had enough of Barbizon, and that I was going to Paris to live. She was overjoyed, for she had had just about all the country life she could stand, and the solitude and hard work were getting her down, too.

The village was now full of American soldiers, and that night in Barbizon I suddenly heard the beautiful sound of



Negro spirituals sung by colored troops going down the Grande Rue. It was a fine contrast to the ugly, ominous pounding of German boots we had become accustomed to. It seemed then as if there might still be some beauty in the world, and some gaiety, and I was soothed as I heard a colored soldier outside my gate say in his soft tones to another one, "I wonder if that's the same moon shining down on Harlem tonight."

It was the beginning of September when I went back to Paris. I stayed in Katherine Dudley's apartment at 13 Rue de Seine until I could find a place of my own. Katherine was still in the internment camp at Vittel to which she had been forced to return. On my first day I went to see my friend in the resistance, Jean Maillard, and together with his associates in the resistance, Jacquemin, Chaumet, and Cornu, we reminisced about our life during the past four years and mourned our missing and our dead. It was exhilarating to be able at last to talk and breathe freely and to realize that it was no longer necessary to fear who was in the room next door or following you along the street. They showed me canceled checks for many millions of francs which they had spent for resistance work. I was still wearing my familiar, old plaid skirt, which I had bought in London in 1938. Jean Maillard proposed that instead of giving me flowers they should buy me a tailored suit. "We want you to look as well as the French girls," he said. They got me a tweed suit of the best available ersatz material.

On the first night of my permanent return to Paris I was invited to dinner at the house of a friend who had known my

husband and his family. I explained that I wasn't very good company, that I had no clothes, and that I didn't feel social, but she insisted I come, as they were having some American and English guests who wanted to meet me. The beautiful apartment in the Rue Chanoinesse was filled with people, and I was overcome with shyness at my first dinner party in so long a time. Mme. Labourdette, my hostess, apologized for the dinner of bouillon, noodles, and onions with tomato sauce. Fifteen of us sat down to dinner, and I was seated between M. Labourdette and a French officer. Opposite me was a tall, red-haired English major of parachute troops, who was attached to the 12th Lancers, my husband's last British regiment. While the soup was being served, the French officer, Olivier Regnault, asked me if by chance I was the wife of Jacques Tartière. I was startled. All day I had been thinking as I saw American GI's on the streets of Paris how wonderful it would have been if Jacques could have witnessed the liberation of the country and the city he loved so much. I had taken an apartment that day in the same building with the Wilkinsons, and as I had wandered around the bare rooms, I had felt particularly bereft. It seemed as if my job were done and my life finished, or at least empty.

"Yes, I am Jacques Tartière's wife," I replied. "Where did you know him?" He turned his chair sideways, put his hand on my arm, and said, "I was with him the day he was killed. Do you know how he died?"

I told M. Regnault that I had only had scraps of information, none of it definite. M. Regnault said, "It was two

days before we took Damascus. Jacques went forward in a motorcycle sidecar with two other French officers to accept the surrender of the troops of General Dentz, who had put up a white flag. They obtained the formal surrender of the Vichyites, turned around to come back to our lines, and all three were shot in the back. Jacques died two days later in the hospital. I went with General de Gaulle when he put flowers on his grave, and he later conferred on him the highest French honor, the Croix de Libération."

The English major sitting opposite was listening carefully. He looked up and said quietly, "You must be Drue."

"Yes, that's my name."

"Jacques spent his last night in London in my flat before he went off to Syria. We spent a good part of the night talking about you. He gave me a letter to send you if I ever found out where you were."

I got up from the table and excused myself. The English major, Peter Miller Mundy, followed me out. "You want to go home, don't you, Drue?" he asked. He took me home in his car, except that there wasn't any home as yet. On the way to Katherine Dudley's apartment Major Miller Mundy gave me the letter he had in his wallet from my husband. It read:

"I'm leaving with our unit tomorrow for Syria. Have had a wonderful stay in England. Thank God for this country and this people. It has given us all a rebirth. We also have this magnificent man, General de Gaulle. Our mission and duty are so clear that there is no fear in my heart. You know I have a lucky star. You and the lucky star pulled me

through my pneumonia crisis. We can never be anything but victorious. I love you with my life. Certainly, *à bientôt!* No matter where you are or how long after this reaches you, you know what there is between us. You know that you must have no fear. *Je t'embrasse, je t'embrasse, je t'embrasse."*



## About the Authors

Drue Tartière was fortunately equipped for the dramatic and dangerous experiences of her daily life in Occupied France. The poise and skill with which she managed her dual role of underground operator and retired, harmless invalid came to her naturally, for she was by profession an actress, with wide experience both in Hollywood and on Broadway. After a childhood spent in Wisconsin and Mexico and a period of study in California and Switzerland, Mme. Tartière appeared on the screen under the name of Drue Leyton. She will probably be best remembered as the blond heroine of the Charlie Chan mysteries, but her successful career also carried her to the legitimate stage both in New York and London. She married Jacques Tartière (who acted and wrote for the French screen under the name of Jacques Terrane) on the day before Munich, and when war broke out she took a job with the French Ministry of Information, directing, arranging and producing broadcasts for North and South American listeners. At the time of the Fall of France, Mme. Tartière determined to remain in the country and the narrative of her thrilling experiences there during the entire German occupation furnishes the material for *The House Near Paris*.

Drue Tartière was assisted in telling her story by M. R. Werner, biographer of Barnum, Brigham Young, Bryan, Julius Rosenwald, and other figures in American history. Mr. Werner has been a newspaper reporter and a magazine writer. He has traveled extensively in France, where he served during the last war.





















UNIVERSAL  
LIBRARY



126 142

UNIVERSAL  
LIBRARY